

Autosport

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Martini's new Grand Prix car

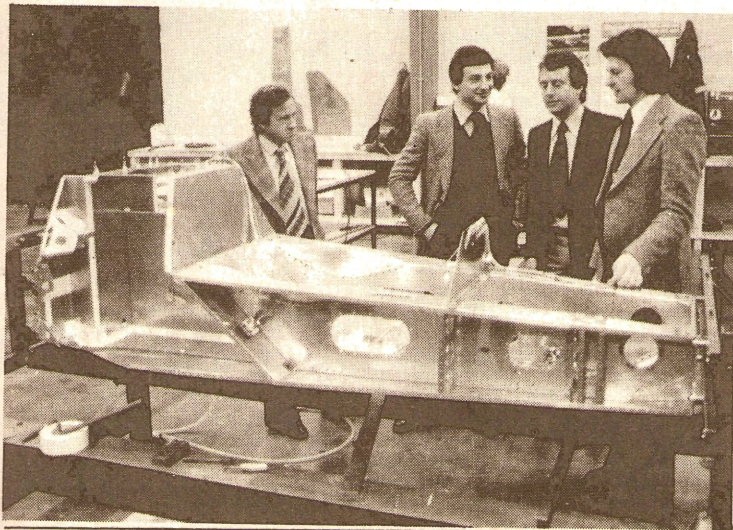
Full Argentine GP preview □ Enzo Ferrari on the F1 scene

The Ford formulae reviewed □ Rover 2600 on test

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The privateers

With eleven driver changes among the member teams of the Formula 1 Constructors Association alone, next Sunday's Grand Prix in Argentina starts the 1978 World Championship with interest at a high level. There is also a remarkably high number of non-member teams which plan seriously to contest the World Championship series, and as the season progresses it will be interesting to see which teams fall by the wayside in the struggle for race entries.

At the latest count, there are 23 cars from 14 teams in the F1CA, and at least nine from eight teams from outside the Association. Unlikely as it appears under these circumstances, five of the non-member teams are brand new, and two of them—Martini and Arrows—are announced in AUTOSPORT this week.

From the ranks of the all-powerful F1CA, the two-car teams are Ferrari, Lotus, Brabham, McLaren, Tyrrell, Surtees, Ensign, Shadow and ATS, and the one-car *equipes* are Wolf, Ligier, Fittipaldi and Hesketh; in addition, Renault are F1CA members in all but name. Arrows is the only two-car non-F1CA team at present, the other cars coming from Martini, Williams, BS Fabrications, Iberia, Theodore, Merzario and Rebaque.

The F1CA/FIA agreement for 1978 stipulates that a number of starters will be agreed for each Grand Prix, according to current circuit licensing procedure, and that the number of entries accepted will be this number plus four; of the total number of entries for official qualifying, four will be at the race organisers' discretion.

With at least 32 drivers seriously attempting to do a full World Championship season—not to mention several more who have already been 'warned off'—there are two distinct schools of thought on the desirability of this agreement.

On the one hand, the pursuit of a monopolistic policy by the F1CA has had not only the desired financial effect for the member teams, but has also produced unprecedented competitiveness within Formula 1. Naturally, this has increased the popularity of Grand Prix racing, and therefore benefits all of us who are involved in the sport.

On the other hand, the titular administrators of motor racing, the FIA, have left individual Grand Prix organisers with precious little leeway regarding entries, and there is no longer any scope for ingenuity of the kind adopted last year by the RAC and Silverstone, for example, which was one way of solving the oversubscription difficulty.

It remains our view that, in Formula 1 especially, every serious competitor deserves the chance at the very least to have his entry accepted. The latest F1CA/FIA agreement represents the next step from a virtual monopoly towards a total one, and for that reason the FIA might well regret its existence in the near future. For sure, before the season is many races old, a minimum of three well-financed and perfectly serious Formula 1 teams will wish that a stronger body existed to negotiate with the F1CA.

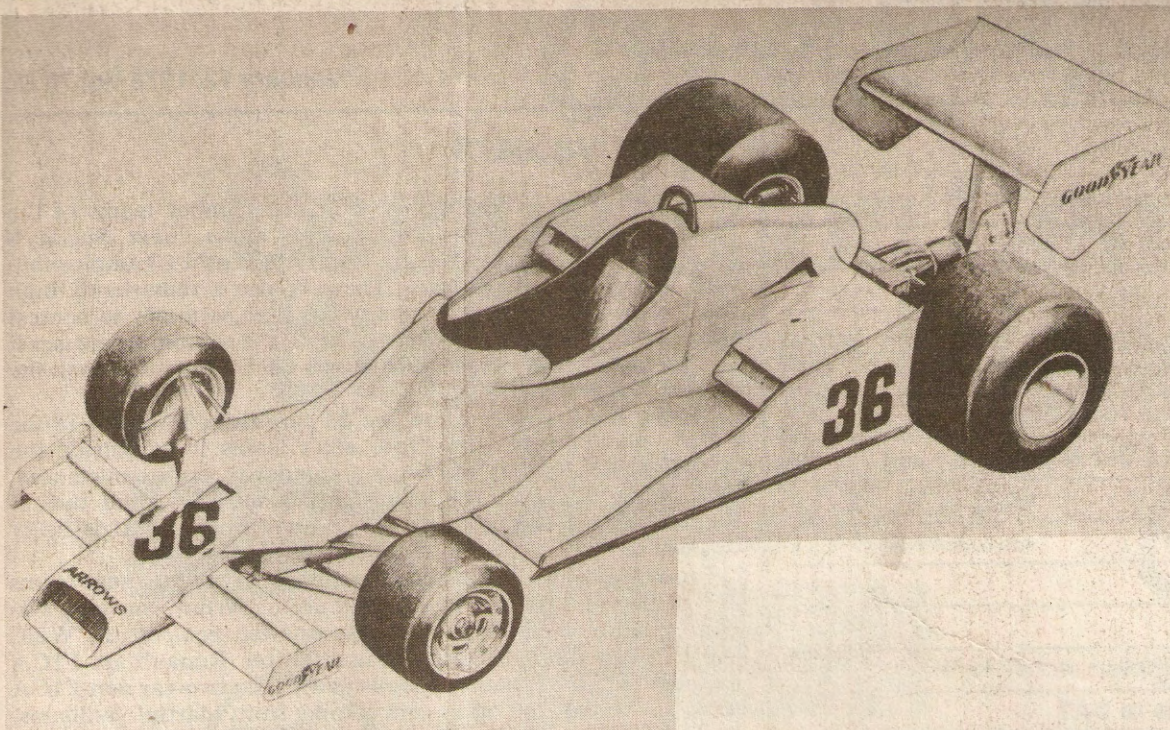
cover picture

European Formula 2 Champion René Arnoux tries on Tico Martini's long-awaited new Formula 1 car, which was unveiled in France earlier this week. Arnoux will make his Formula 1 debut with the car at Kyalami in March. More details *Pit & Paddock*.

next week

Here we go again! The Argentine Grand Prix is always an interesting race, but rarely sets the trend for the season. Who will win this year? Read our full report—The AUTOSPORT International Racing Calendar for 1978—Our review of Group 1 saloon car racing—The European Rally Championship gets under way in Austria—Chrysler Sunbeam 1600S on test—Castrol/AUTOSPORT Rally Championship 1978: the prospects*

*These items were correct at the time of going to press.



The Arrows is not yet built, of course, but this is how Tony Southgate says it will look. The car will leave for Rio on January 21.

Arrows plans announced

Last autumn, when rumours arose of a split between Don Nichols and Jackie Oliver, everyone wondered what the former Lotus driver was going to do. There seemed little doubt that he would try to operate his own team, this being an ambition of his for a long time. Oliver had, of course, been a director of Shadow Racing since the company became involved in Grand Prix racing at the beginning of 1973.

Hand in hand with the Oliver rumours went similar stories about Gunnar Nilsson. For whom would he drive? It seemed obvious that there would be a tie-up between the two, but confirmation of the fact was a long time coming.

The new team is to be called the Arrows Racing Team, the name deriving from the initials of the principal team members—AR for Franco and Christina Ambrosio, R for Alan Rees, O for Jackie Oliver, W for Dave Wass (the team's chief draughtsman) and S for Tony Southgate.

At this point, to save confusion in the future, we should make it clear that 'Arrows' is singular. In other words, Gunnar Nilsson will drive an Arrows, not an Arrow. In the other car will be Riccardo Patrese, despite recent rumours that Rolf Stommelen would drive it, a story which Alan Rees refused to deny only three days before last Thursday's official launch.

The story of the new team is, in fact, a remarkable one. Once Oliver, Rees, Southgate, Wass, Pete Kerr and several of the mechanics had all made the move from Shadow, there was very little time before the start of the new Grand Prix season.

"We first found a factory on November 15," said Oliver last week. "We moved into it on the 28th, the machinery followed a week later, we set up a drawing board for Tony Southgate on December 6, and work on the new car began on December 12. Our team agreed that it was worth giving up their Christmas holiday this year so as to run the car in the Brazilian Grand Prix."

The project has received a tremendous amount of publicity in the national

media, with considerable emphasis on the remarkably short period of time involved. From moving into the new Milton Keynes factory to racing the car at Interlagos will be only 60 days!

Before leaving Shadow, Tony Southgate was, of course, involved in the design of so far unrevealed DN9, and he frankly admitted that the Arrows FA/1 is a logical development of that car. "There is obviously some similarity between the two designs," he said, "but the two cars will look quite different."

"The Arrows is a 'wing' car in the same way as the Lotus 78. Its design has been totally dictated by intensive wind-tunnel testing and, indeed, it features a new concept in wing formation. The car's side 'wings' can be removed in half an hour, and that should give it considerable flexibility. It should be able to cope with all types of circuit."

Southgate estimates that the car should generate more downthrust than any other F1 car, the drag factor remaining 'no higher than normal'. The first part of the side wing has a shovel-type profile, leading to a second, more orthodox aerofoil which also houses an oil cooler.

"The shovel-type wing can be removed, leaving only the oil cooler aerofoil on each side," said Tony, "and for this reason we have made the monocoque unusually narrow, so that when the car runs 'naked', on very fast cir-

cuits like Hockenheim, the frontal area will be kept to an absolute minimum, cutting the drag factor drastically."

Southgate has given a great deal of thought to the brakes. Twin-caliper, 11-inch discs are fitted all round, but Tony feels that cooling to the rear brakes is an area rather neglected in recent F1 design. The Arrows's rear brakes will be cooled by an integral ducting system "which, theoretically, should give us the best brakes in the business."

Apart from its unusual narrowness, the monocoque is conventional. Front suspension is by inboard spring/damper units with top rocker arms and narrow-base lower wishbones. Rear suspension follows previous Shadow practice with parallel top links, a single lower link and twin radius rods. Both front and rear roll bars are cockpit-adjustable.

The new premises are very large and impressive, and a fantastic amount has been done in a short time. All the finance for the new operation has come from Franco Ambrosio, but Jackie Oliver says that the team still seeks commercial sponsorship.

Gunnar Nilsson was not present last week, being home in Sweden, convalescing after a recent operation. All being well, however, Gunnar will be fit enough to drive at Interlagos. If not, Patrese will give the Arrows its debut. If their initial determination can be sustained, success should not be far away for the Arrows Racing Team.

Patrese, Wass, Southgate, Oliver and Rees outside the new factory.



'Ring rejected

Reports from Germany suggest that the building plans for the 'new' Nürburgring have been rejected by the FICA.

The official reasons for this have not been made clear at present, but at a meeting in Frankfurt last Thursday, Bernie Ecclestone said that 'additional thought should be given to the present construction plans', adding that the new 'Ring should be built in such a way as to set an example for all future race circuits. We are not quite sure what this means.

Representatives of the Nürburgring and the AvD took the rejection very calmly, however, and accepted that they must comply. If the Nürburgring dies, the whole of the Eifel region dies. A spokesman for the Nürburgring said that they were still confident of getting the German Grand Prix back in about three years.

Bernie Ecclestone does, of course, have a financial stake in the German Grand Prix at Hockenheim, although it is not suggested that this affected his views on the Nürburgring in any way.



Chiti—the man behind the Alfa.

F1 Alfa on the way

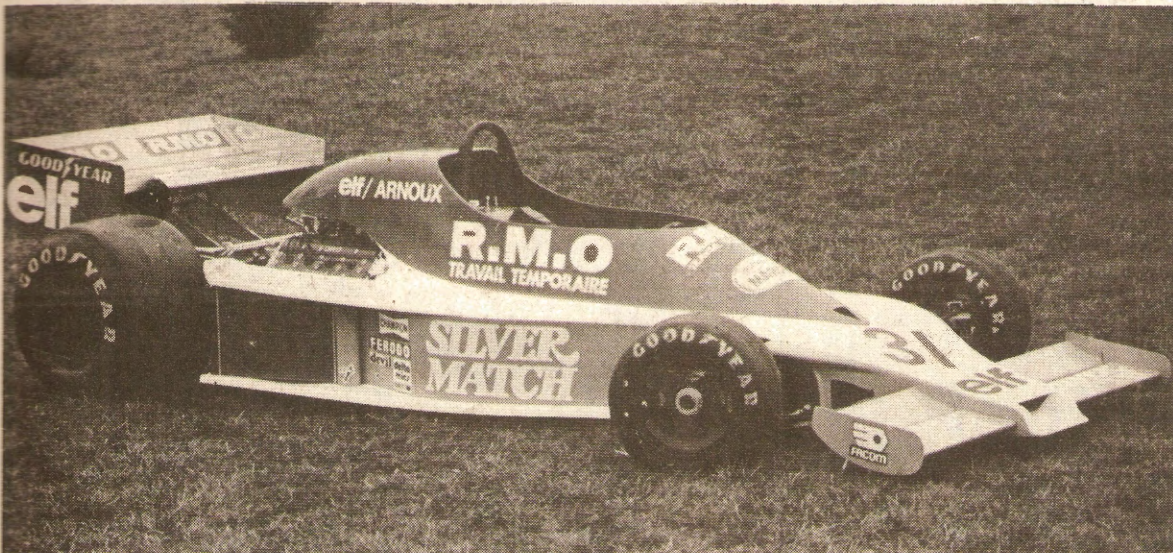
Italian sources indicate that Alfa Romeo no longer make any secret of their hopes and plans for the future, and latest rumours suggest that an F1 Alfa may well be seen in competition next year. Indeed, it is said in some quarters that Autodelta already have a chassis.

At a recent Parmalat press conference in Italy, Carlo Chiti was asked if Alfa Romeo would continue to supply engines to Bernie Ecclestone's Brabham team after the introduction of Alfa's own car, and Chiti replied that they would.

We are also told that Pirelli are very definitely looking towards Formula 1, developing a radial tyre for use on the Alfa Romeo Grand Prix car. And, as we reported some weeks ago, it seems probable that Ferrari will test such a 'tyre in the near future.

● A. J. Foyt intends to race more often this year than last. The great Texan will have two new Coyotes at his disposal for the Citicorp USAC Championship, and will also have a pair of Chevrolets for the major NASCAR races. As before, sponsorship will come from Gilmore Broadcasting.

Arnoux's new Martini MK23



Tico Martini's first F1 car bears a close resemblance to its F2 predecessors.

Rolling out last weekend for the first time was the Martini MK23, the first Formula 1 car to come from the company's Magny-Cours workshops.

As might be expected, the MK23 is a straightforward, conventional car, with Cosworth engine, Hewland FGA gearbox and Goodyear tyres. It will race for the first time, at Kyalami, in the hands of longtime Martini driver Rene Arnoux.

"I finally decided on Formula 1 at the end of 1975", Tico Martini told us at the weekend. "For some time before that I had a design in mind, but I didn't really get started on it until the middle of 1976. The actual building of the car began about a year ago.

"We've built a simple, basic car because I'm sure it pays you to start that way. We always worked that way in Formula 2, but there you start simple and you stay simple. I know that Formula 1 is a very big step. I don't yet know how much the car weighs, but I don't think it will be ridiculously heavy. If it is heavy, well, I would rather start with a strong car, maybe a bit heavy and then reduce it. From what I have seen, it seems that most racing cars start off very light, and become heavier as the season progresses. In fact, our F2 cars have always been lighter at the end of the season than at the beginning, and I hope the same will be true of the F1 car.

"As you can see, there are many similarities between the F2 car and the MK23. The general appearance is similar. And so is the whole of the rear end of the car. The rear uprights, in fact,

are slightly modified F2 uprights. Without doubt, the biggest difference between the two is in the front suspension. This is because I wanted to fit inboard shock absorbers, which we've never had on a Martini before. The front uprights are completely new—they had to be to accommodate the twin-caliper brakes which are apparently a necessity in Formula 1 these days. And, of course, the monocoque is totally different from those of the F2 cars. Because of the amount of fuel needed for a Grand Prix, an F1 car's weight distribution is very different from an F2 car's, the driver sitting further forward and so on".

In the past, Tico Martini has personally attended very few races, preferring to stay at the factory, concentrating on other projects. Now that his company is into Grand Prix racing, however, that will have to change. "Yes, I'll probably go to most races this year—or maybe I'll be there for practice and leave the night before the race. We'll do our initial testing here at Magny-Cours, make sure that the car is basically working all right and that nothing falls off. Then we shall go to Ricard for serious testing".

Had any other driver been considered? "No, it was always going to be Rene. We have worked with him for a long time now, and I think it's very important to get on well with your driver. We know Rene well, right back to his days in Formule Renault. It was the same with Laffite and Pironi. It would have been very much harder to go into Formula 1 with a driver I didn't

know. When Arnoux and Tambay were driving our F2 cars, Rene was usually quicker, you know. Patrick has gone really well in Formula 1, so that must be an encouraging sign for Rene".

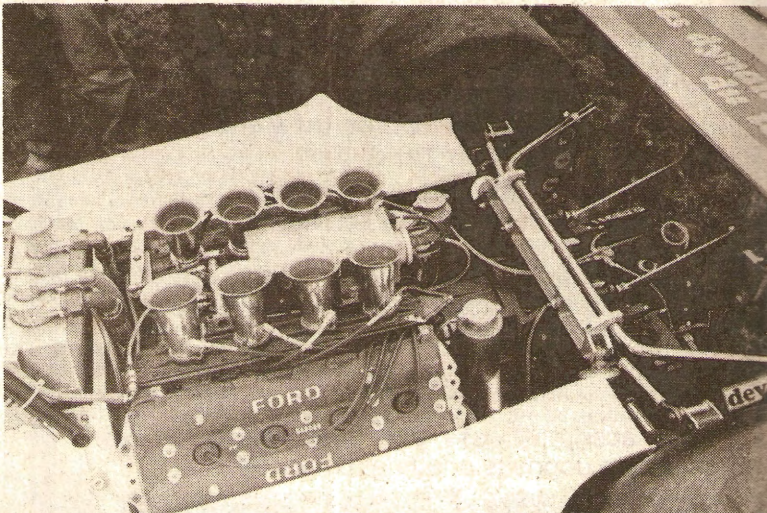
We wondered if there had been any question of using Michelin tyres, but Martini said that there had been no contact with the French company. "We've always been very happy with Goodyear, and, anyway, I don't think Michelin are ready to handle a lot of teams at present". Had he thought about any engine other than a DFV? "No, not at all. We always had a good relationship with Renault in Formula 2

and so on, but there has never been any question of using their F1 engine. That doesn't worry me really, because I honestly believe it will be a long time before a turbocharged F1 engine consistently beats a normal 3-litre. Actually, I'm rather surprised that Renault didn't supply engines to, say, Tyrrell, for a while before building their own car. I'm no expert on engines, but I think a DFV was the obvious thing for us".

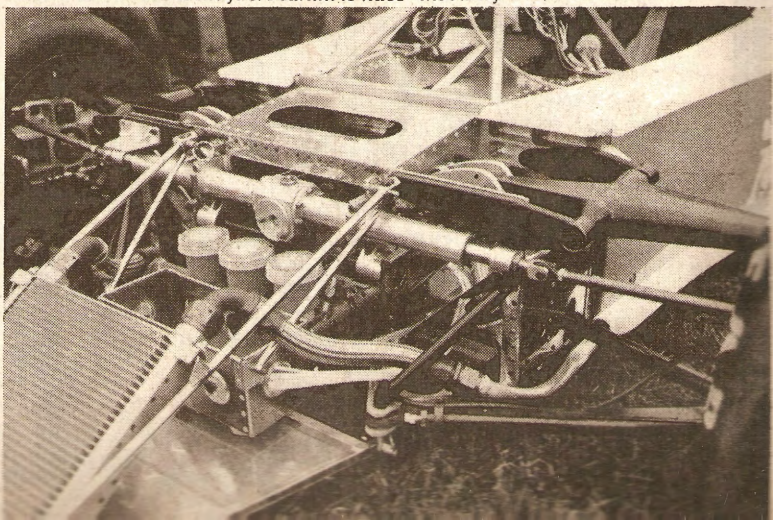
Running the team this year will be Hugues de Chaunac, of course. His association with Martini goes back a long time, and he and Tico have clearly defined 'areas of operation'. "Anything to do with 'the car' is handled by Tico", said Hugues, "and the rest is up to me: the running of the team, sponsorship and so on".

The three sponsors of the team are, in financial order, RMO (a large French 'temp' agency, which has backed Martini in the past), Silver Match (who make lighters, pens, etc) and Elf (whose name you may have heard before). The Silver Match sponsorship was arranged only three weeks ago. "Yes, we were a little nervous", smiled de Chaunac. "We could have possibly got through without Silver Match, but there would have been very little testing and so on. For example, we are having four Cosworth engines, which will be serviced by Cosworth. With the transportation involved, that will be very expensive. Now, I hope we have enough money to get through the season properly".

The car, which is beautifully constructed, has been made entirely in the Martini factory. Nothing has been farmed out at all. It's an impressive operation, run and staffed by cheerful, enthusiastic people, and we welcome them to Grand Prix racing. The team, by the way, is to be known as Equipe RMO Silver Match Elf.



Above: The rear of the Mk23 is completely conventional, based largely on the F2 car. Below: The MK23 is the first Martini to have inboard front shock absorbers.



Martini, Arnoux and de Chaunac—full of enthusiasm for the project.



Superb BP F3 prospects

Prospects for this year's BP Formula 3 Championship look tremendous. Prize monies for the series will be over £11,000, and 17 rounds will be run, each competitor dropping his lowest scoring round.

Many people believe that Chico Serra will emerge as the man to beat. The 20-year-old Brazilian will, of course, drive a March-Toyota 783 for Ron Dennis's Project 4 team. The 1977 champion, Derek Daly, moves up to Formula 2 this year, but Derek's close friend, Bernard Devaney, will be contesting the BP Championship.

Willy T. Ribbs, the coloured American who made a great impression in the Dunlop Novice Formula Ford Cham-

pionship last year, will drive a Ralt, run by Alan McCall. This outfit is apparently very well funded, and Ribbs proved very quick when testing a F3 Chevron recently.

Other front runners are likely to be Philip Bullman, who will drive a March, sponsored by his father's company, Patrick Gaillard, Stephan Johansson, who was very quick, if terrifying, at Monaco last year, Tiff Needell, Ian Flux and David Kennedy. But perhaps the quickest man of all will be 25-year-old Nelson Piquet, who was one of the stars of the European F3 Championship last year. All in all, there seems to be the prospect of a great BP Championship this year.

F1 drivers in G1

Grand Prix drivers in British Group 1 races—that is the prospect on at least three occasions this year. Ford Competitions Manager Peter Ashcroft revealed last week that Ford, in consultation with a couple of other manufacturers—believed to be Leyland and BMW—had decided to run current GP drivers in three of the British G1 rounds.

Ford's G1 effort will be centred on a two-car team for Stuart Graham in Britain, the second car for use as a spare and mount for the guest driver while, in Europe, Graham will run two cars in the French series.

Ashcroft confirmed that Ford would

not be contesting the Trans-Europe G1½ series. Referring to the meetings at which rounds take place as "little better than clubbies", Ashcroft said that the best G1 series in Europe were the British and French and that is where they would go.

In the German G5 championship, Zakspeed would again be running Escorts with works assistance from Cologne with the promise of a 1.4 turbo engine by mid-season. Apparently development of the engine has been carried out both in England—by Cosworth and Weslake—and in Germany by Zakspeed and the final engine will be a combined effort from both sides.

Silverstone changes

The *Daily Express* International Trophy, to be run at Silverstone on March 19, will have a larger prize fund than ever before: £100,000. This year's race, the 30th in the series, will be run over 40 laps, as usual. Given decent weather, a new lap record looks to be a foregone conclusion, for the track has recently been resurfaced, at a cost of £150,000. Grandstand and paddock tickets are available from the Silverstone Box Office, Silverstone Circuits Ltd., near Towcester, Northants. Further details of this will follow shortly.

The Silverstone round of the new

Trans-Europe Touring Car Championship has been rescheduled, and will now be run on September 17, the same day as the Access Tourist Trophy. The original date, May 29, will now feature two races (up to and over 1600cc) in the RAC G1 Saloon Car Championship.

● We apologise for an error in last week's article about the Jaguar XJS, in which we erroneously said that the Air Traffic Controllers had been on strike this summer. It was, of course, the Air Traffic Control Assistants who caused the chaos.

Rosberg's second New Zealand GP

Keijo Rosberg, who led the Peter Stuyvesant sponsored New Zealand Formula Pacific series after the first two rounds at Bay Park (page 10), looks likely to retain the title which he won a year ago. Last Saturday, the fiery Finn drove Fred Opert's Chevron B39 to his second successive victory in the New Zealand Grand Prix, winning both

races at Pukekohe to secure a 16pts lead in the championship chase. He led the first race all the way, but spun on the third lap of the second event and had to work his way back up from 11th place to score a fine win. Larry Perkins scored a second and a third with the Ralt, and now lies second in the points table with 15pts to Rosberg's 31.

Scheckter again in South Africa

The Scheckter Show in South Africa went into the New Year when Ian Scheckter dominated last Saturday's opening round of his national Formula Atlantic championship. The reigning champion qualified his new 1978 March on pole position for the opening event in the eight-race series, at Cape Town's Killarney circuit, and led all the way to win the 40-lap race by a clear, and very comfortable, 10secs from former champion Dave Charlton. As usual, Ian's March 78B is decked in the livery of his longtime sponsors, Lexington.

For Charlton, the Killarney event produced a welcome—and very satisfying—return to form. After two seasons of disappointing results, Charlton has lost his Lucky Strike sponsorship to Tony Martin, and he is now financing his March 76B out of his own pocket. However, last Saturday he turned in an excellent performance, beating Martin's new Chevron B45 into the bargain. On his way to second place, Charlton passed first Martin and then Bobby Scott (March 77B).

Unfortunately, Charlton's progress was one of the few things the spectators could get excited about in an uncharacteristically processionary South African Atlantic race, the field becoming well strung out in the heat of the local summer. Scott seemed to have third place sewn up, but on the penultimate lap he was forced off the track when lapping Len Booysen, the South African having an outing in one of Willi Kauhnen's F2 chassis (née Elf).

In the absence of Derek Bell—who will drive one of these cars in the next round of the series, at Kyalami on January 28—Booyesen was invited to

give the car a shakedown run, part of the development programme which the Kauhnen team is undertaking during the first three South African races in preparation for the coming European Formula 2 season. For the Springbok series, the Kauhnen cars are fitted with Richardson Atlantic engines.

Scott's retirement elevated not Martin, but Nols Nieman to third position with his March 77B, although Nieman had lost almost a lap with a spin. Martin, who had three spins during the race, finished fourth ahead of Roy Klomfass, the former Team Gunston driver who has now replaced John Gibb in the ex-Keegan Uniewinkels March for this season. Booysen completed the first six with the Kauhnsen.

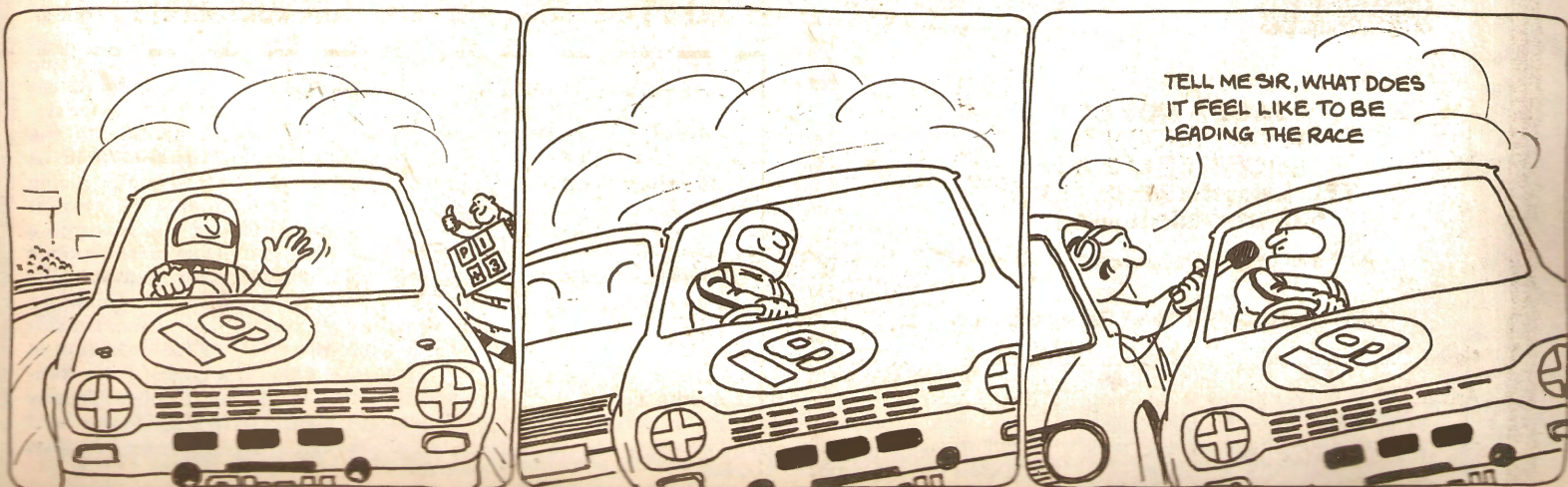
Klomfass's place in Eddie Binco's Gunston March 77B has been taken by Trevor van Rooyen, the talented young South African who had such a fine Formula Ford 1600 season in Britain last year. However, van Rooyen's Atlantic debut was disappointing. He was dicing with Martin early on when the two cars touched, and van Rooyen went off, damaging his water radiator.

Another South African veteran of a 1977 European season, Desiré Wilson, hired Basil van Rooyen's Chevron for the Killarney race but, having qualified eighth fastest, the promising lady driver (who campaigned an FF2000 Crosslé last year) retired when her engine blew on the fourth lap.

After Kyalami at the end of the month, the series (which has lost its Philips sponsorship) moves to Welkom on February 11 for the last of the three 'international' races.

catchpole

by Barry Foley



Heinz Hofer

To lose a driver in an accident during a race meeting is a tragic affair, but it is somewhat tempered by the knowledge that the man was competing in a career in which the risks are known and accepted. To lose a colleague outside the race track is harder to accept, because of the complete unexpectedness of such a thing happening. Within the sport, most people are considered replaceable, and any loss incurred is soon overcome and wounds heal in time.

However, Heinz Hofer was not replaceable. He was unique. Despite his youth and the relatively short time he had spent in motor racing, he commanded admiration and respect rarely enjoyed by persons many years his senior. He achieved only a fraction of what life had to offer him, but what he had already achieved was more than most of us will do in a full lifetime. For those of us fortunate enough to work with him, he gave his encouragement, advice and friendship, and in return received a devotion given to few men.

To his fiancée, Linda Wood, and to his close friend Roger Penske, to his parents and many friends, we offer our deepest sympathy. He will be deeply missed.

WIMBORNE,
DORSET.

A PENSKE EMPLOYEE

Soap needed

Having attended the Christmas race meeting at Brands Hatch, I must complain about the disgusting line of chat adopted by commentator Mike Smith. He should be ashamed of himself, as should MCD for allowing it, especially as a lot of spectators were children. People with young kids got up and went home disgusted, as I was. If people want to hear that sort of chat, they can go to Working Men's clubs on Stag Nights.

BOREHAMWOOD, HERTS.

JOHN HENEBERY

Herman

I do feel that 'Herman the German', otherwise known as Jochen Mass, whose consistency in finishing in the top six was superior to that of his more exalted team-mate, should really have been included in your 'Top Ten' (December 22/29).

LONDON W4

NICK SYRETT

Mass: a borderline case. . . .



Culcheth after the Manx: so near. . . .

Culch

And so, another Leyland man bites the dust. A more personable rally man you would have to go a long way to find. OK, he wasn't the fastest man on earth, but usually he was there when it mattered, at the end.

Obviously, I didn't see him on all his victories in exotic places, but I shall always remember the 1977 Manx, when on the last day (towards the afternoon) the word went round that Culcheth was in second place. I have never seen so many smiling faces on the final stages, willing a man to victory, and I doubt I will again. Of course, when we got to rally HQ Pentti's unassailable lead became evident, but even then folk were wishing he would break down.

It would have been a magic victory, but like the rest of Culch's career it was so near and yet. . . .

It won't be the same looking down the entry list and not seeing, Driver: Brian Culcheth/Co-driver: Johnstone Syer.

MORECAMBE, LANCs.

PHIL WORTHINGTON

Licences

I am writing, during the season of goodwill, to wish peace and happiness to all those at the RAC Motor Sport Division, who soldier bravely and serenely on in their sweet, old-fashioned, bumbling way.

I have just had the pleasure of a visit to the hallowed portals of Belgrave Square in order to appropriate some of the rather rare licence application forms. Although a pile was on the receptionist's desk, she rather sweetly told me to . . . off! A thoroughly charming and personable young lady. I expect that you will have to pay an extra fee to have your licence processed in a staggering three working days, as opposed to the normal three months.

That is not all. My licence fee is to rise by a paltry 75 per cent—to finance a new limited company, the purchase of prestige offices in the most expensive area in London and, no doubt, to organise our international rallies for all and sundry—provided they are foreign.

I have a much better idea. Let every motor club have one share in this new company so that we can at least have a controlling interest at the AGM. That, at worst, will relieve the intolerable 'monopolistic' situation that exists now.

Will they continue to absolve themselves from all responsibility for their amazing incompetence? If only some of you knew about the débâcle that caused the cancellation of one of this country's premier road events last year. Only luck prevented this night rally making headline news for weeks, but it cost the organising club several hundred pounds.

Still, I suppose the chance is to be for the

better, and the new Controlling Body of Motor Sport will be much more efficient and in touch with the grass roots of all the branches of the sport.

Oh, for a change—even the AA!

RICHMOND, SURREY. MICHAEL J. R. PEEL

Privateers

I don't know whether all the Christmas/New Year eating and drinking has affected my eyesight and memory, but could somebody please explain the current position regarding privateers and Grand Prix racing?

First, we are given to understand that, effectively, a 'closed shop' will exist in future World Championship Formula 1 races, thus excluding the likes of Brian Henton, Boy Hayje and Emilio Villota from even attempting to qualify their 'private' cars.

Naturally, one assumes that those competitors who have been running Formula 1 machinery will take part in the new British F1 championship. However, in AUTOSPORT of December 22/29 we are told that Brett Lunger has been testing his McLaren M23, and Hector Rebaque his Lotus 78, both in preparation for a full World Championship season in 1978. This is good news indeed, for I for one am all for the small private teams being allowed to mix it with the heavily sponsored 'works' outfits.

Does this mean that some private entries will be allowed? If that is the case, then it is obvious that money does indeed talk! A deal has been done between the F1CA, March and ATS to allow the latter to take March's place in the Association. So have Lunger and Rebaque, both of whom don't appear to be short on sponsorship, also concluded arrangements to allow them to run? Confusion reigns!

I see every reason to allow privateers to take part. For example, I seem to remember that, in 1977, the most consistent Marches were those driven by Arturo Merzario and Patrick Neve, whereas the works entries were invariably nowhere.

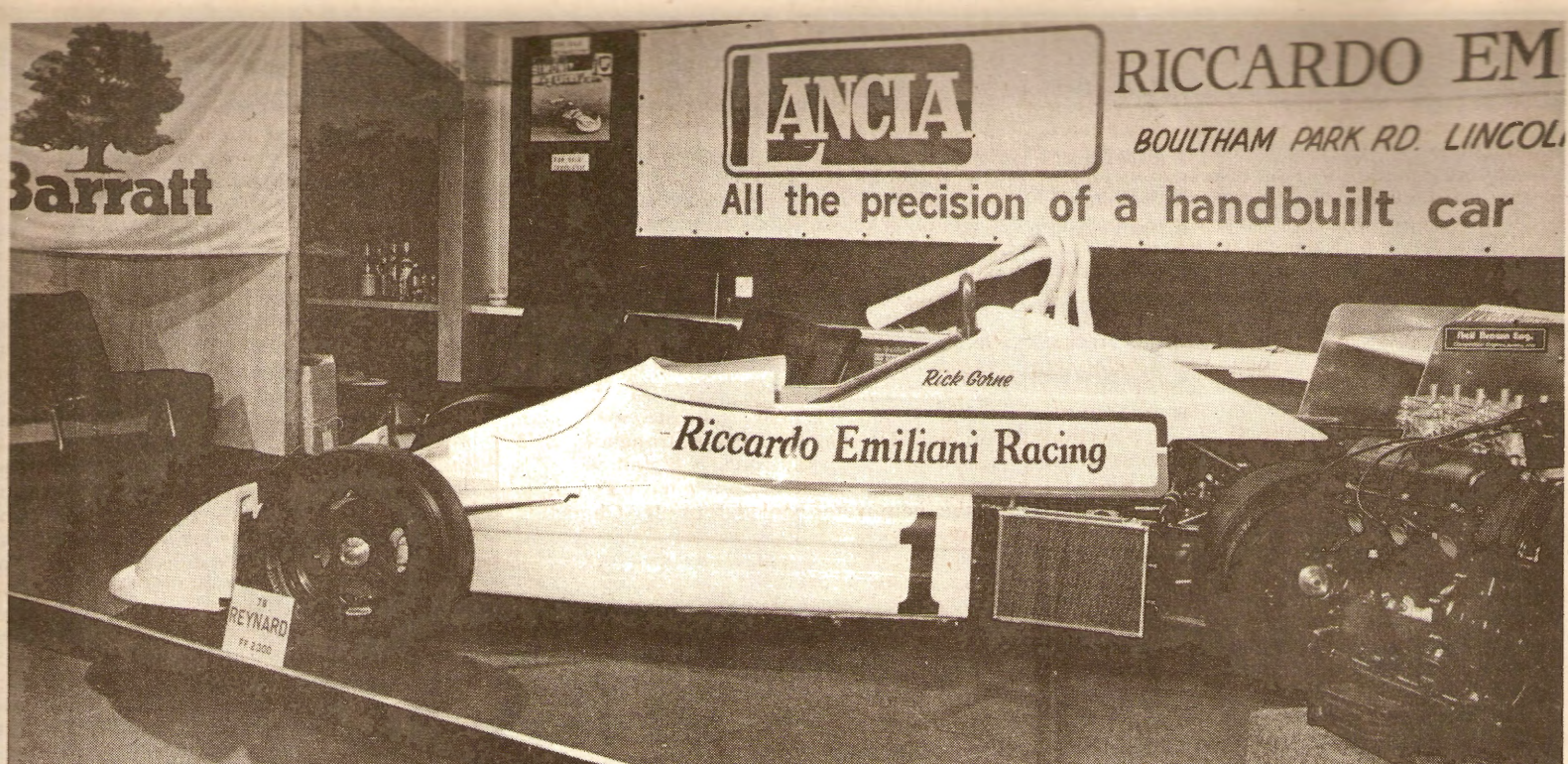
After all, what is the point of 26 'aces' screaming round and round, when there are no 'beginners' by which to measure them?

BECKENHAM, KENT

J. P. RUSSELL

Then as now?

Twenty-five years ago this week, (AUTOSPORT, January 9, 1953) we carried news of one Bernard Ecclestone's latest foray into racing for the coming season. Bernie had managed to acquire Derek Annable's Kieft for an attack on the 1953 F3 championship and, while on the subject of F3, Clive Lones had purchased a Cooper with similar intentions. AUTOSPORT's two representatives in the motor-cycle Press Trial, John Bolster and Cyril Posthumus, rode 350cc AJS machines and, despite being out of the awards, both finished the gruelling course. Maserati announced their new 2-litre sports/racing two-seater and, at the same time, revealed modifications to their F2 car to the press. Both cars featured a 1961cc six-cylinder engine developing 140bhp in the sports car application and up to 170bhp in the single-seater chassis. A new racing Renault made its debut that week also. It was owned by Louis Rosier and featured a 750cc engine mounted in an aerodynamic chassis intended for sports car racing. It was actually built in Italy and looked similar to the Renault-DB of the day. John Bolster explained the intricacies of fuel-injection in his *Technical & Otherwise* pages, John Buncombe's Dellow took the Kimber Trophy Trial and the classic Exeter Trial was held with some 31 competitors claiming first class awards.



Undoubted star of the show was Rick Gorne's new Barratt/Emiliani Reynard SF78 on the Richard Dutton Racing stand.

DONINGTON SPEED SHOW:

Midlands market

MARCUS PYE records a high level of interest in Britain's only racing car show of 1978.

It is, sadly, three years now since the last of the 'proper' Racing Car Shows took place in London, giving all the leading manufacturers of racing cars and associated paraphernalia their annual opportunity to show off their wares to the prospective customer and enthusiast alike. In fact, since the last Olympia show British racing fans have been treated to only one Speed Show, at Tom Wheatcroft's Donington Park circuit back in 1976. It was therefore with great anticipation that we heard of Donington's plans for a similar event in 1978.

Unfortunately the show was rather poorly promoted, many people not knowing whether it was actually taking place until the final week of 1977. Allied to this, the non-appearance of such household 'names' as March and Chevron was a disappointment, although we understand that this was not through lack of trying on the latter company's part. The 1978 Speed Show, although small—it occupied only one hall this year—was predominantly a quality affair with a lot of interesting machinery on view. Many of the stands were shared which gave the exhibition a rather cramped appearance and, after a quiet couple of days to start with, the paying

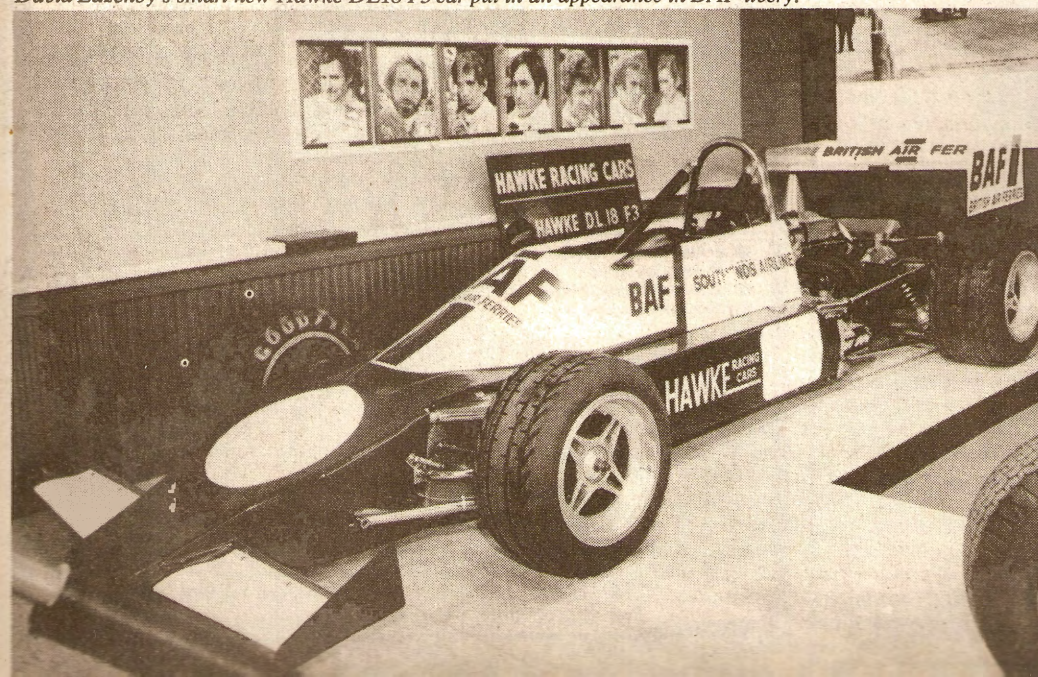
public were rolling in in their hundreds by Sunday and interest was unexpectedly high on all stands. The show ends next Sunday (January 15).

On entry to the show, having first gazed at the glorious new McLaren M23 and the equally stunning Shadow-Matra DN5—both new additions to the Collection—the first exhibit to attract the visitor's eye was a Renault-Boutique-ised 5TS with a list of extras as long as your arm and a very natty black and gold paint job. This was displayed by GT Cars and, although strictly out of place in the show, did cause a great deal of interest. The Renault 5, of course, can easily be adapted for rally or race work with factory approved kits from Renault Sport dealers.

Hawke Racing Cars' stand was the first to show a new range of cars and it was the amiable James Weaver, himself no mean FF1600 driver, together with Jock Nairn who showed us round the new DL20 FF1600 (the chassis is also adaptable to suit FF2000 and FSV applications) and the DL18 F3 machine which has recently been tested by Tiff Needell. The FF1600 chassis is notable for its fully enclosed rear end and long aerodynamic side pods while engine replacement time is cut down drastically as there is no top engine frame. In fact, Hawke say that a unit can be taken out in 15-20mins. Triumph Vitesse front uprights are retained although the rear end now features cast magnesium uprights to resist damage from light bumping and boring. Body panels are reinforced with carbon fibre for added strength and lightness. The F3 car, in the livery of BAF, looks very much like a 'grown-up' DL19 FF1600 with its narrow nose and side radiator profile and it could, by the look of many components, be suitably uprated to Atlantic or F2 specification.

Hawkes were situated in the interconnecting corridor between the first two halls of the impressive building, alongside the Lodge Corner Agencies stand. David Winstanley had

David Lazenby's smart new Hawke DL18 F3 car put in an appearance in BAF livery.



myriad racing vehicles for sale from a Motus kart to John Morrison's lovely Lola T360 F2 car which occupied the entire floor area, Winstanley having to hover over a chair in the remaining square foot of space but creating interest nonetheless.

As we entered the main display area, shrugging off the oppressive humidity as we did so, the real star of the show caught our eye on the Richard Dutton Racing/Reynard Cars/ Neil Brown stand. It was dominated by the first of the new Reynard SF78s to be seen in public (actually chassis 2), the car to be campaigned in FF2000 next season by Rick Gorne. Adrian Reynard has penned a really super looking car this year and the old saying 'if it looks right, it is right' must surely apply to this. The car features narrower side pods to the SF77, a top section similar to the 1977 Anson F3 machine and a nosecone reminiscent of the original wide design fitted to the F1 Renault. Rick's car is basically white although it features the oak tree symbol of Barratt Developments on its nosecone and the Italian national colours, green and red, in bands along the cockpit sides in deference to its entrant Riccardo Emiliani—Lancia dealers in Lincoln. Emiliani and sponsors Barratt are very keen to make Rick's second season in FF2000 a successful one and with Dutton's ability on the preparation side the team should be a top contender in 1978.

The Crosslé stand centred around a brand new 32F to be sponsored by ESAB who make welding gear and to be driven by Graham Davey. Manning their display was the helpful Colin Scott who explained the basically unchanged chassis and revealed that Bert Ray is increasing his liaison with Crosslé in London and moving to larger, better equipped premises in the next few weeks. His first-class spares and repairs service will operate as before, which certainly bodes well for the prospective Crosslé owner. Also on the stand was Dave Minister with his latest FF1600 engine.

Van Diemen International were showing one of their rapid RF77 chassis which will continue virtually unchanged for 1978. The car, in fact, is a Jim Russell Racing Drivers School chassis, Russell's instructor Gerry Corbett being on hand to advise the budding racer.

Saracen Engineering of Wrotham displayed both the exciting new FF2000 car, as forecast last week, and the black FF1600 chassis owned by their Scandinavian dealer, Peter Knutsen, both of which have been driven of late by Rick Morris although the former is the property of Peter Lloyd. Alan Weller was at the show to meet potential customers and fortunes for the year-old company look to be on the up. Saracens have been selling very well in the States through their dealer, Pacific Racing Organisation, and interest is currently high. Formula 3 and Atlantic cars are nearing the end of design work, all featuring the distinctive fully enclosed bodywork which, apart from looking superb, gives optimum advertising space for sponsors of the Peter Hampsheir-designed cars.

Royale Racing were the only other manufacturer to take the opportunity to be present and they were represented officially by Marc Smith's colourful Flowsheet Panels RP24. As with the other leading chassis of 1977 the Royale is hardly altered for the coming year and two of their customers, David Dickson (Goodmayes Motors) and David Sears (Nick Dixon Racing) spent some time with visitors showing them over the chassis. Further down the hall sat Frank Sytner's RP25 FF2000 car in the livery of Foxcub Books while a third example of the *marque*, also an RP25, was to be seen on the Scorpion Race Hire/Racing Drivers School stand under the directorship of Mike Eastick.

Scorpion were also showing off their latest FF1600 car, a Van Diemen RF77 similar to that on Ralph Firman's own stand. Eastick was also displaying a selection of helmets and Jaybrand racewear. As the largest race hire business in Europe (Scorpion have 10 FF cars at present) Scorpion are now able to offer an intensive four day course for only £255.

Caterham Car Sales had taken a stand for their ageless Super Seven Series III which was

finished in white with attractive contrasting stripes and powered by the trusty Lotus Big-Valve twin cam unit. Surely this must still be the ultimate in status-symbols for the discerning sports car owner.

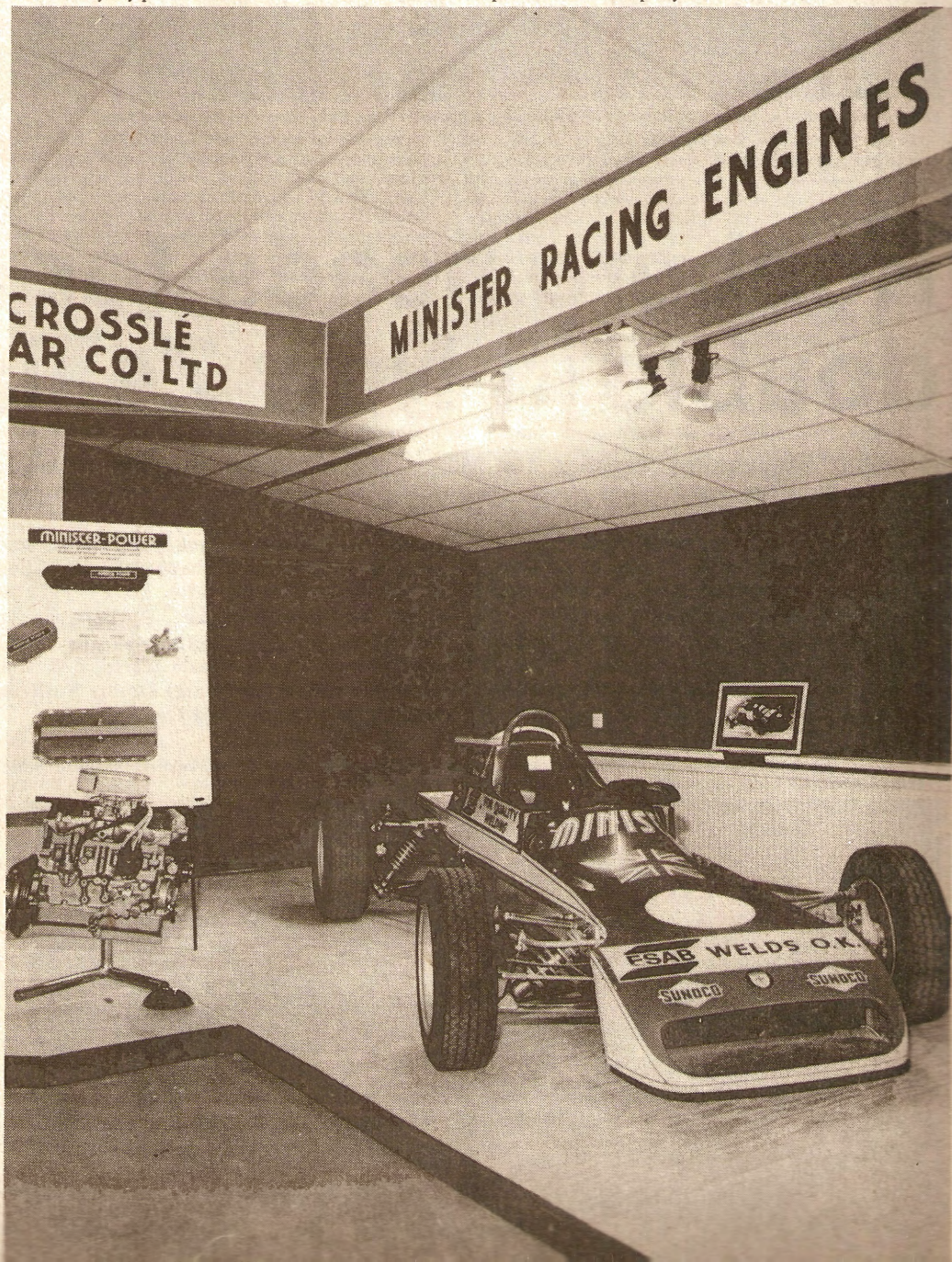
Among the other exhibitors were Nigel Sullivan-Tailyour and Peter Grzelinski whose M&H Racemaster distributorship was showing a large range of tyres for most competition applications. Allycat wheels were also on their stand along with some very smart M&H T-shirts for the coming season's racing activities. M&H launched their new wet weather tyre for 1978 at the show, the quick warm-up characteristics being already familiar to the hillclimbing fraternity in this country and abroad.

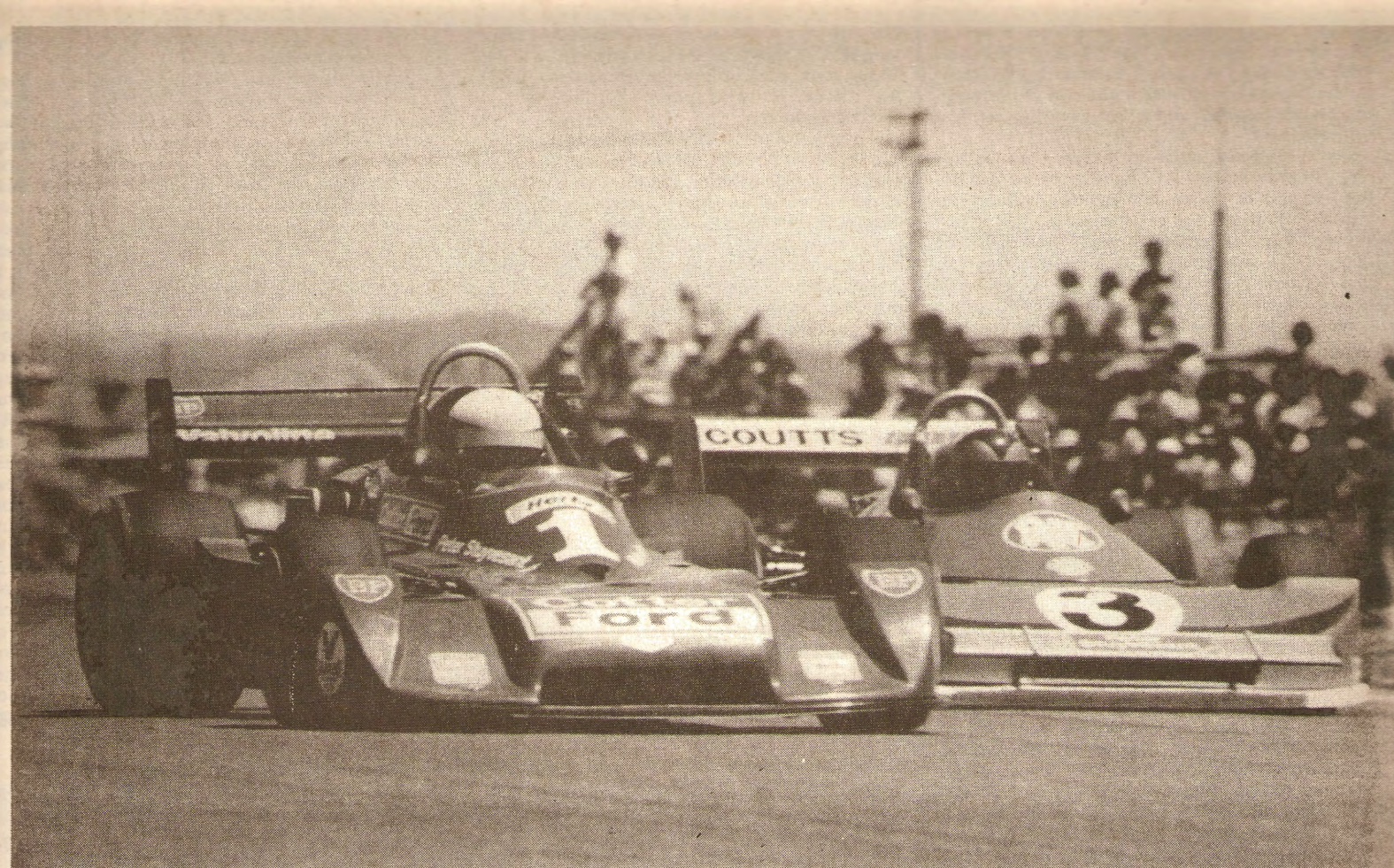
Titan Engines were in attendance with elaborate plans to break the Toyota stronghold in F3 with their new Titan-Chevrolet unit which is still under development, as is a new FSV engine to the new water-cooled formula. Champion Spark Plugs were represented by the Electric Service Co of Birmingham who also displayed a range of Champion Action Accessories. West-over driving shoes had a selection of their universally used footwear, while general motor racing gear was on show on the stands of T&G Marketing and Chris Steyne's Formula One concern, the latter attracting a huge crowd of visitors to watch one of Brian Kreisky's ghoul-ish 'accidents set to music' video recordings. GPS Wheels had some of their super split rim designs on show while the BRSCC, NSCC,

MGCC and BMRMC were all busy promoting themselves at the show.

Last, and certainly not least, our weary legs carried us to the Hawk Racewear display where, under the guidance of John Hughes, we were to witness perhaps the most outstanding sight of the day. Having just launched the latest in racewear, the new Firebird Series IV suit chosen by Derek Bell for Le Mans in June, Hughes was keen to demonstrate his new fire-proof quilting filler. This material was then exposed to a blowlamp (about 1300deg C) for a lengthy period of time and not only did it not burn but it was not discoloured in any way and dissipated the heat instantaneously. Independent tests are claimed to have proved this suit to be the best available today, Hughes having issued a challenge to all his rivals—each to wear his own brand of suit in a specially created test fire and to walk through a tunnel of flame. One leading manufacturer has already declined the offer although John's confidence is such that he will willingly challenge anyone at any time. Not only are the suits exceptionally well made but the styling is fashionable too, the Hawk racewear ranging from the single layer Proban rally suits through two and three-layer garments to the new Firebird. A full range of accessories is also available from gloves and balaclavas to helmet skirts and underwear. This young company has only been in existence for a year, their products being very well researched and also competitively priced.

The beautifully presented ESAB/Sunoco Crosslé 32F occupied the Irish company's stand.





Perkins (right) makes his run at Rosberg in the leading Chevron on the final corner of the second race.

BAY PARK, NZ

Rosberg heads for a double in New Zealand

Opening Stuyvesant victories for Millen and Rosberg in Chevrons—Perkins and McMillan quick for Ralt—
Report: PETER GREENSLADE—Photography: ACTION PHOTOGRAPHY

The five-meeting, ten-race Peter Stuyvesant series for Formula Pacific cars began at New Zealand's Bay Park circuit on January 2, and the reigning champion, Finland's Keijo Rosberg, took an immediate lead in the points table. Driving, as usual, one of Fred Opert's Chevrons, Rosberg had a variety of problems in the first of Bay

Park's two 50-mile qualifying races, and could only finish third behind Steve Millen in another Chevron and Larry Perkins (Ralt). In the second race, Rosberg was in command, and won with ease after both Millen and Perkins made pitstops, letting Dave McMillan (Ralt) and Danny Sullivan (March) into second and third places.

New Zealand's international motor racing series, the Peter Stuyvesant affair, got under way, as usual, at Mount Maunganui's Bay Park circuit on the first Monday of New Year. Also as usual, it was the subject of controversy.

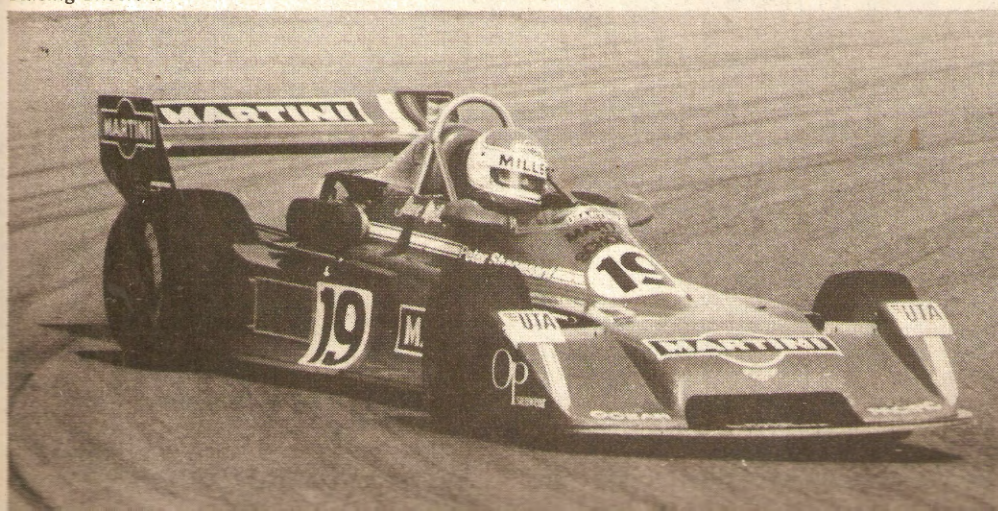
The organisers' original intention was to run a five-race series, each race comprising two 'heats' from which the contenders would gain points; the actual winner would be determined by totalling the points. Although this system is used from time to time, it does have some obvious disadvantages. In any case, it was decided that instead of two heats there should be two races at each meeting. That being so, there is a ten-race Stuyvesant series this season!

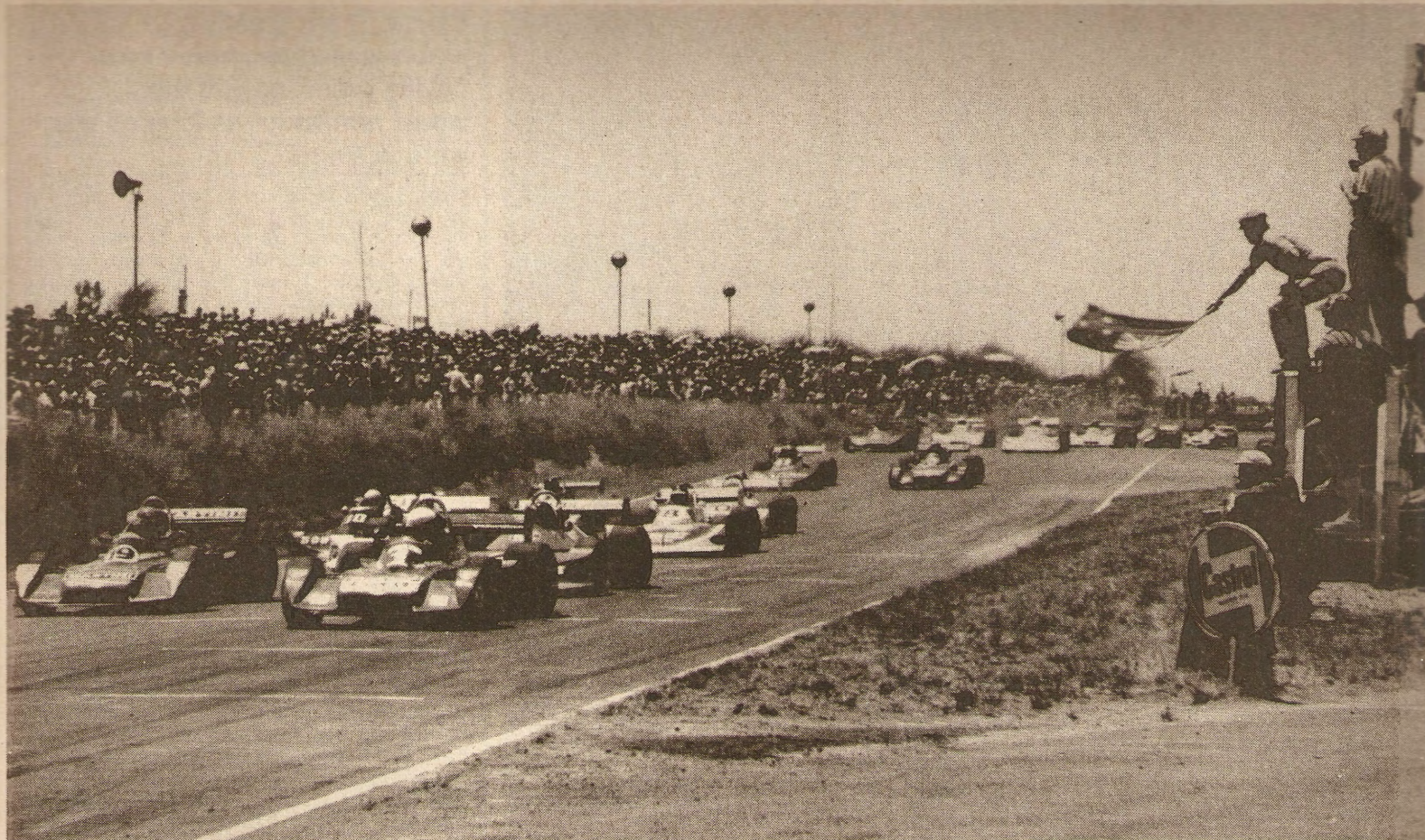
The amazing thing about this sudden switch was that few of the non-participants present at Bay Park knew that a change had been made until after the first mutterings of discontent were heard from one of the entrants, Fred Opert. Fred, whose Keke Rosberg had been fastest qualifier and had finished third in the first race behind New Zealander Steve Millen and Australian Larry Perkins, claimed that there should be a clear 2½ hours break between the two races, whereas the organisers apparently ignored this FIA rule and continued the race programme as if there were two heats rather than races. In actual fact, the interval between the races was about 2 hours, give or take a few minutes, and it was Rosberg who won the second race from New Zealander Dave McMillan and the American Danny Sullivan.

Dare it be said that Opert quoted the FIA rulebook simply because he wanted all the time he could get, in order to enable his crew to cure engine misfire and oversteer problems with Rosberg's Chevron?

Rosberg put in a lap of the 1.33-mile circuit in 53.9s to be fastest qualifier, but McMillan made fastest race lap in both races, his times being 54.2 and 54.0

Steve Millen once again proved his mastery of the Bay Park circuit, winning the first race in the Martini/Schollum Racing Chevron.





Rosberg and Millen accelerate away at the start of the first race, with Sullivan and Perkins tucked in behind.

record-holder was Bruce Allison (Ralt RT1) with 54.7.

Both races were of 38 laps, and Millen won the first in 34m 43.6s, there being a 2.9sec margin to Perkins. Rosberg won the second in 34m 49.1s, there being a 1.2sec margin to McMillan. Because he improved his seventh fastest qualifying time of 54.4 to 54.2 in the first race, McMillan automatically took up the inside position on the third row of the paired grid for the second race, displacing Miedecke, who had been fifth fastest qualifier with 54.3, and Richard Melville (March 76B), who had been sixth fastest with 54.4.

Rosberg, the winner of the 1977 Stuyvesant series, is obviously favourite for this one, although Perkins could oust him this time. As he pointed out, he passed the Finn twice at Bay Park, and it would appear that his Scuderia Veloce entered Ralt is quicker in a straight line than Rosberg's Opert Chevron B39.

There are in fact 24 entries in this series, but on the Bay Park showings it is extremely unlikely that more than half a dozen have any chance of carrying off the ten-race championship. Rosberg and Perkins seem to be the best, with McMillan and Millen (who won the Bay Park round last year but did nothing much thereafter) also well in the hunt. Sullivan with his March-entered 77B and Australian Miedecke with his 76B have rather better than runners' chances, while Bobby Rahal in his Opert B39 is likely to lead the rest.

Ian Grob poked his Alan Docking March 77B into a fence while attempting to qualify, and so has no form on which to make an assessment; although damage was reportedly comparatively minor, he elected not to start on the day. Belgium's Pierre Dieudonné, entered by Dr Joseph Ehrlich in his Ehrlich RP3, made no impression at Bay Park, finishing 12th in the first race and 11th in the second.

On the Bay Park showings, Brett Riley (March 76B) and Ken Smith (March 76B) look fairly promising, but Brett did not really come up to his supporters' expectations, and neither did Smith, although he went some way towards salvaging his reputation with an exceptionally close-run sixth place in the second race after retiring from the first. David Oxtan, who had been in motor racing longer than most like to remember, did not finish the first race, completing only eight laps before the BDA in his Chevron B39 self-destructed; needless to say, the Vacation Hotels-sponsored car did not appear in the second race.

Taken by and large, the remainder of the entry really had nothing much to write home about after they had told Mother that the weather was beautifully sunny and warm at Mount Maunganui and, judging by the applause, the very large crowd had got its money's worth.

Qualifying was very much a ho-hum business and, although Rosberg ended up quickest, Opert did not appear all that optimistic, as the Finn was only 0.1sec

was Perkins with 54.1, the figure subsequently achieved by Danny Sullivan in the factory-entered 77B. Miedecke got down to 54.3 and then came Melville, McMillan, Robbie Francevic (Modus) and Rahal, all on 54.4. Smith, a previous series winner in the old F5000 days, was next with 54.5 and then came Riley on 54.7.

Slowest of the remaining nine was young Steve Emson with his Modus-based Eastool. Still recovering from his injuries sustained some time ago at Timaru's Levels circuit, he made the rolling start with 62.9 to round off the 20 places on the grid.

As expected, Rosberg asserted his authority from the start of the first race. Perkins, Millen, Melville and McMillan were next, and they were followed by Sullivan and Miedecke. Next in line, some distance back, came Rahal and Riley, but even at that stage nothing but a major pile-up could have changed the dispute for the major placings.

Rosberg, coping with loads of oversteer and an engine misfire at high revs, held on grimly, but Millen had the bit well and truly between his teeth, and he took his Martini-sponsored Chevron B42 past Perkins after three laps, and past Rosberg after five. The Finn held his second place desperately through to lap 34, when Perkins finally made his move.

Perkins immediately began to gather in Millen, as Rosberg drifted back. McMillan began to nibble at the Finn, but could not get past him, although Rosberg said when it was over that McMillan would have got him within another five laps, because the oversteer became so bad that there was no traction coming out of the turns. Miedecke and Riley drove steadily for fifth and sixth places, almost a lap behind McMillan.

Among the non-finishers were Oxtan, who blew his engine, Smith, who had a throttle cable brake when he was lying ninth on the 12th lap, and Melville, who suffered clutch trouble early on.

So like last year Millen was the master of Bay Park, but Perkins probably commanded just as much respect with his vigorous driving style and economic use of the track, for he was never a yard off his line.

Bay Park, Mt Maunganui Peter Stuyvesant Series, Round 1 January 2

38 laps, 50.54 miles

1. Steve Millen (Chevron B42), 34m 43.6s;
2. Larry Perkins (Ralt RT1), 34m 46.5s;
3. Keijo Rosberg (Chevron B39), 34m 49.6s;
4. Dave McMillan (Ralt RT1), 34m 50.8s;
5. Andrew Miedecke (March 76B), 34m 55.9s;
6. Brett Riley (March 76B), 35m 4.4s;

etc.
Fastest lap: McMillan, 54.2s.

Because of his improvement (with fastest race lap), McMillan moved up a row for the second race. Otherwise the grid positions were unchanged for a shambles of a rolling start.

According to the rules, the pace car's function is to

the state of the grid, it is left to the pole man to act as the pace car until the starter is satisfied that the field is ready to race. However, on this occasion the pace car, instead of pulling off the track after its one lap, went on again to do a second. Rosberg, momentarily under the impression that as pole man he would make the pace, planted his foot and then realised that the pace car was continuing. He braked, and Perkins ran into the back of his Chevron to leave the Ralt with a badly broken nose. Perkins pitted to replace it and got going again to weave his way through the field. Perkins was in the sixth row instead of the second when the pace car pulled off the circuit, and the starter, either satisfied or fearing further embarrassment, released the pack.

Rosberg immediately hit the front, and there he remained right to the finish. McMillan moved into second spot, with Millen attending closely. Then came Melville, Perkins, Rahal and Sullivan, Riley and Miedecke and Smith. Millen was in business and on the completion of seven laps he was in second place and looking hard at Rosberg. Fortunately for the Finn, a wire became loose and Millen had no alternative than to pull in to the pits on the 10th lap.

Millen's defection let McMillan back into second place, and he held on to it until the finish. Perkins was next, but he lost a lap when a tyre punctured.

That left the bespectacled Australian very much out of the hunt, but when he resumed he was with the front runners, and Rosberg was under the misguided impression that the Australian was running second and challenging for the lead in the late stages of the race. He had passed McMillan, whose pit manager was up with the play. However, Opert failed to give Rosberg the message and Keke thought that the Australian was out to win.

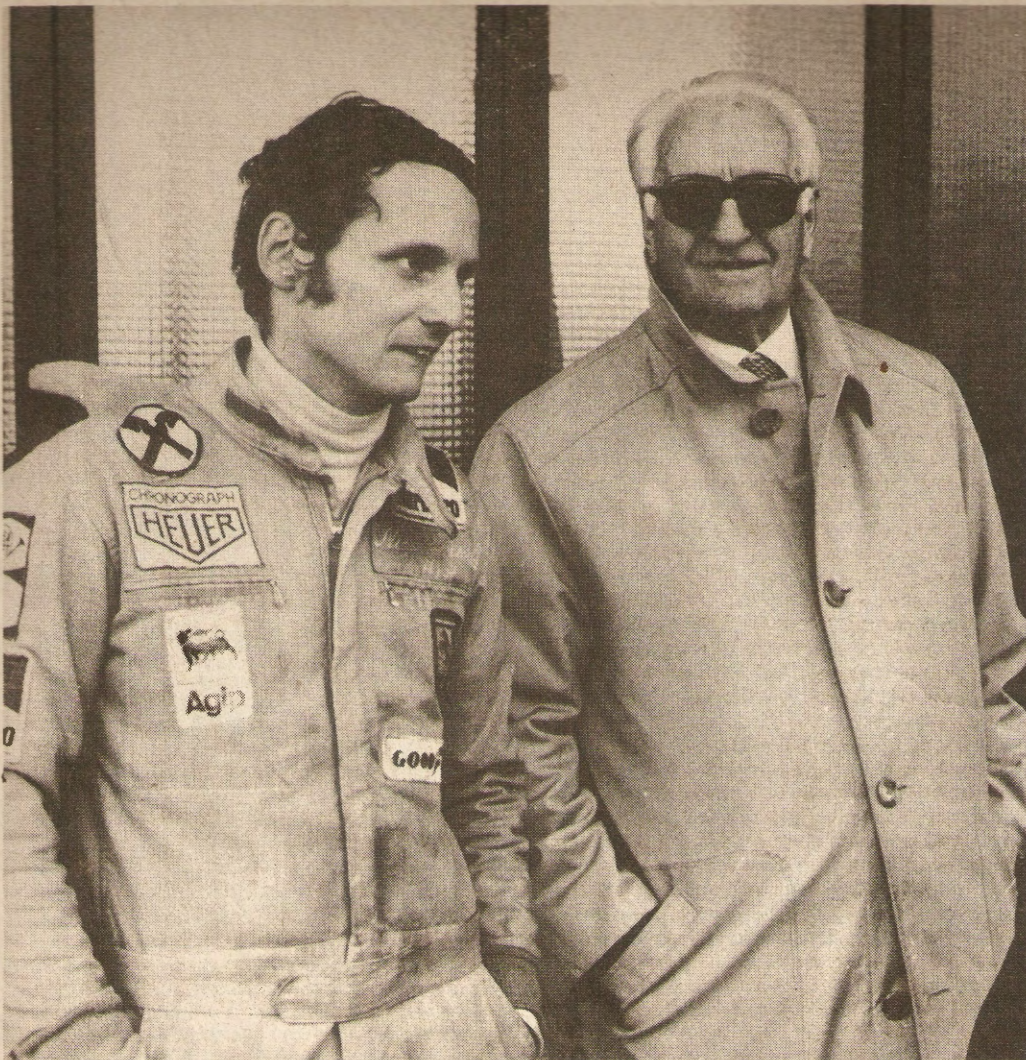
Perkins tried all the tricks in the book over the last few laps, but each time Rosberg found a counter-trick. That was until the last lap, when in the left-hander swinging onto the finish straight Perkins elected to try the outside. It all looked bad, but it worked, and Perkins led the Finn over the finish line and went on to do another lap, finishing tenth in the race. Although the whole thing was rather pointless, it was the dice of the day for the crowd, and psychologically it may have done some harm to Rosberg. The Finn was not too happy with his boss: "I drove the race of my life, and all for nothing," he complained, when it was over.

Bay Park, Mt Maunganui Peter Stuyvesant Series, Round 2 January 2

38 laps, 50.54 miles

1. Keijo Rosberg (Chevron B39), 34m 39.1s;
2. Dave McMillan (Ralt RT1), 34m 50.3s;
3. Danny Sullivan (March 77B), 35m 0.7s;
4. Andrew Miedecke (March 76B), 35m 7.8s;
5. Bobby Rahal (Chevron B39), 35m 12.5s;
6. Ken Smith (March 76B), 35m 13.6s;

etc.



Ferrari and Lauda in happier days.

Ferrari on Formula 1

Despite the advent of the F1CA, Enzo Ferrari remains his own man, a true autocrat. DOUG NYE discusses the commendatore's recent Italian press conferences.

Enzo Ferrari is 80 this year. Still he towers above all other figures in motor racing—over 50 years in the sport and still going strong. Whenever he speaks to the press it is a major occasion and last year was unusual in that there were two Ferrari press conferences; one in September to review the year and explain Lauda's 'treacherous defection' and the other in November to unveil the 312T3 design study prototype.

Even at 79, Ferrari is a dominating speaker. He addressed his September audience for nearly three hours and at the finish was as bright and fresh as when he had begun while his audience of much younger journalists looked exhausted!

Mr Ferrari, however, is not a well man, although words come easily to him. The fascination of what he says is not so much in the words he uses as in the veiled suggestions almost always implicit between the lines. Examine his words again and again, and between the lines there is more mean-

The foxy old entrepreneur is at one moment in imperial command, then bantering, then humble, then all injured innocence. There's an occasional glimpse of the shattered father, still grieving for his only legitimate son, the morbid fascination with death, then the diamond-hard industrialist suddenly emerges to launch a savage attack on those who challenge his or his company's interests.

Occasionally he will drift away into a very Italian affirmation of 'honour' and 'spirit', but nothing can disguise that kernel of towering stature and hard-won political experience which the tall figure in immaculate suit and amber-tinted spectacles always emanates.

He began his September speech in a typically subjective manner: "I take it you are interested in knowing the truth about the Lauda case. This is the Ferrari version of the truth and it is backed by documentation at your entire disposal. Lauda came to Modena on August 29. As in 1976 when the contract was renewed, Messrs Della Casa and Lardi" (actually head of the Maranello build team and Mr Ferrari's natural son according to a rather tasteless exposé in an Italian scandal rag) "were present at the meeting. Mr Montezemolo arrived eight minutes

Lauda: "I am greatly embarrassed because I recall having promised you that I would remain for as long as you were at Ferrari."

place. Lauda faced a man who asked him why he came after what had been written" (the Zandvoort leak of his move to Brabham) "and his precise answer was 'I am greatly embarrassed because I recall having promised you that I would remain for as long as you were at Ferrari. Unfortunately I can no longer keep my promise because I had no reasons to stay with Ferrari'. I asked what he meant by 'reasons' and he replied 'I cannot find the right words in Italian to explain myself' and he began to talk in English. I then interrupted him to say 'if you are going to say nasty things, you might as well say them in Italian, which you know very well'.

"The conversation soon came to an end when I told him 'When you said you would remain as long as I stayed you must have made some quick calculations—I would be 80 in February 1978—and taken into account the sickness which has been bothering me for many months. If you did these calculations I can well understand how much your promise was worth'.

"Lauda continued to express himself but in a rather fragmented manner and was unable to expand further on the 'reasons'. As in the past Ferrari did not make any offer which might have led Lauda to stay. No figure was ever mentioned, although someone said that Lauda wanted a renewal of contract in May which was rejected by Ferrari. This was completely untrue and it is this false statement that has caused many to believe that this was the origin of the disagreement between Ferrari and Lauda. Lauda never asked for anything . . . he said he no longer had purpose for racing and did not know whether he would carry on with his sports career.

"We immediately arranged for a communiqué with the clear understanding that no one was to speak about the relationship until the end of the contract. We stuck to our word but it would seem that the other party did otherwise.

"I can now add that . . . when he was in room No 406 of the Bouwes Hotel at Zandvoort, Lauda placed his future in the hands of an English nanny. . . ."

Ferrari reiterated his conviction that ". . . a win is 50 per cent due to the driver and 50 per cent the car. Mennea" (the Italian sprinter) "wins also, and he is sponsored by Fiat, but in winning he uses neither a Ferrari chassis, nor a boxer engine. He uses his legs! In this case . . . it is 100 per cent given by the athlete. . . ."

Franco Gozzi, Ferrari's press chief, quoted from the magazine *Blick* in which Niki was quoted as saying: "It is not true I received from Ferrari the attention worthy of the name—if anything it was me who helped the managers and technicians at Maranello. I was responsible for my latest GP wins, not the staff of Ferrari. It is Niki Lauda who made Ferrari great, not the other way round. . . . I had always made sacrifices for the team but this was not reciprocated (so) I looked after my own interests and accepted a more competitive car together with better assistance than I was given at Ferrari."

Naturally this really stirred the Old Man: "This then is supposed to be the lack of affection of which we are accused. But let us continue. We gave Lauda all the moral and technical assistance we were able to give and five days before he came to dismiss himself he rang Montezemolo and said 'How on earth do you think I could leave Ferrari when I consider Ferrari as a second father. . . .'

"Lauda can say whatever he likes, but we do appreciate that he cooperated to an exceptional degree. We well remember Lauda as a test driver in 1974-75 but equally we recall more recent years when Lauda—due to his personal promotion—let his own interests take priority over those of the team. . . . We have yet to find a test driver who, in addition to giving his

tions as to how they can be eliminated . . . The morbid Ferrari emerges: " . . . we once had an engineer who possessed such qualities. He was *Ingenieri Fraschetti* who designed our cars and tested them himself. Unfortunately he died young—and full of promise . . ." in a testing crash at Modena Autodrome.

Ferrari then demonstrated—after a fashion—the former affection between himself and Lauda by quoting from a cable sent to him on August 6, 1976, five days after the Nürburgring fire: "Dear Ferrari. First of all I'd like to thank you very much for having decided as you have" (not to race in Austria) " . . . to know that someone else was in my car would have been a nasty shock for me. Regrettably I shall not be able to race at Monza due to the burns. I believe I have won the most important battle in these days. I hope to be in Maranello soon. Yours Sincerely (signed) The Jew."

"I do not know," added Ferrari, softly, "which meaning you will give to this signature. I shall read it tomorrow in your newspapers."

When pressed, as doubtless he expected, he explained: "Everyone who knew Lauda well called him *Abramino*" (Little Abraham) "I should think that this nickname was given to him to underline the nature of a man who is very careful with money. I think it is the right interpretation and it is not a malicious one . . ."

Later Ferrari tossed some really poisonous bait into the arena: "I do not have to comment (on Lauda's reliability). After I have shown you certain documents and told you certain facts it will be up to you to judge Lauda. Should you need further information by which to judge him I shall give it to you. It concerns the new sponsors of F1, those who entered the F1 field with manners comparable with those of coal merchants."

"In August Lauda spoke to Tanzi" (of Parmalat, the Italian Unigate) "and made it quite clear that he would not stay with Ferrari. Long before August 29, on which date he spoke to me, Lauda asked for a renewal of the contract for 1978 and it was agreed that his earnings would have been increased from \$50,000 to \$100,000. At the same time Ecclestone suggested to Tanzi to sponsor two cars, one of which was Lauda's. Tanzi was very interested but wanted to see Lauda's contract. Ecclestone asked \$14 million, \$500,000 of which were meant for Lauda."

Warming to some dodgy manoeuvring, Ferrari continued: " . . . I shall now read two telexes to you, one from Wolf and the other from Ferrari. The first is from Walter Wolf Racing (Peter Warr) to Mr Enzo Ferrari:

"We should like to advise how much we value our past and existing relationship and trust that it is beneficial to Ferrari's team too: We would therefore not welcome any event which would render the driver situation as precarious. Mr Wolf and myself have given the matter a lot of thought and have come to the conclusion that the contract we have entered into with Jody Scheckter for 1978 will have to be fulfilled by the driver under any circumstances. We also have an option for 1979. At present there is nothing that would oblige us to release him from his contract and, since any approach made to Scheckter by a team such as yours would inevitably make him feel uncomfortable, we respectfully ask you to advise him that this opportunity is not available to him. Certain of your usual courteous cooperation. Yours Sincerely."

"The telex reply of September 7, 1977, from Mr Enzo Ferrari to Walter Wolf Racing reads:

"I have received your telex of September 6. I met Jody Scheckter at the end of August, 1976, when he said he was free of engagements. As we could not come to an agreement for 1977 on that occasion, we left on the understanding to meet again in the forthcoming year. Ferrari would not engage a driver who would offer himself notwithstanding previous engagements. We shall be pleased to engage Scheckter if and when he will be free to choose his future. Our friendly relationship and the cooperation offered to you today will continue in future. Yours Sincerely."

Having read this regal communication, Ferrari explained what it was all leading up to: "What has this to do with what we were saying about Tanzi of Parmalat and Lauda? I will come to the point.

"Prior to Monza, Wolf invited Tanzi to join the Wolf Racing Team advising him that he had an option on Lauda! This deal, too would have to be concluded in Rome within this week.

"Then Tanzi came to see me in June and asked that Fittipaldi be given a car. I replied that I could not make up my mind until the beginning of September" in deference to the F1CA rule " . . . dissatisfied with my reply, Tanzi approached Montezemolo" of Fiat "from whom he got a negative answer. Montezemolo thought nothing of Tanzi's action. This is how things stand between Lauda and Wolf!"

When told that he was calling practically everybody else a liar Ferrari swore he was not, then explained that he waited until after the all-important Italian GP to blow the story because "I wanted no interference with the race" and bitterly added " . . . if the other party had kept his promise not to talk until October 31 this would not have been necessary."

When asked under what atmosphere Lauda would race in the last GPs of the season: "He will race in the atmosphere known to him to date . . . the atmosphere would have been marvellous if 'The other Party' had stuck to his word.

"We do not judge Lauda in any way today", he added, convincing nobody!

"I never thought he would go. When I was told that Lauda met Ecclestone and that he had flown to London I thought they were lies but you insisted. In a way I must apologise to you, but I thought Lauda would not need to tell me that he and his pilot had tummy aches. I feel a fool because I believed what he told me, but now that the whole truth is known it is up to you to judge the man!

"Why has he gone? I can only say that each man has his own frustrations and his own mentality. . . . Lauda's half, perhaps, is not compatible with the situation at Ferrari. What caused him to leave? An argument with Forghieri? Possibly. Just as Lauda wanted to excel in his job, so Forghieri protects his interest and that of his colleagues who with him created the car.

"He accounts for and protects the product of Ferrari workers. . . . All you see is the finished product and the result it gives in the races. You never consider all the work that goes into it behind the scenes—if you did and were able to understand all the dramas, humiliations and sacrifices that go into making a car from the metal you would be more lenient. . . ."

In November the Lauda divorce was complete, and past. Ferrari said: "I have no intention of talking about Lauda. You tell me that in his book he speaks of Montezemolo having offered him a blank contract to stay at Ferrari. I don't know. I have not read his book. I would rather not talk about this fraction of the past. I was at the receiving end of the wrong, but things were twisted in such a way as to make me seem the one who did wrong. Lauda belongs to the past, nothing more."

Ferrari is intensely proud and protective of his cars' reputation and in the September conference he rounded on Minini, the journalist who the previous year he accused of "talking balls", for calling the company "a manufacturer of taxis" and "*squadrono ridicolo*", a ridiculous squadron.

"I could have taken your article," bantered Ferrari, "made my corrections in blue and red and sent it to your boss, but I believe that he who works is bound to make mistakes . . . you do not concede that Ferrari are human and may make mistakes . . . but I forgive and absolve you", he added, pontifically.

Minini protested that it was Bernie Ecclestone who called Ferrari "a ridiculous squadron" and that he was merely quoting him—the "*Nano di Merda*", more or less 'Shitty little dwarf'! "I have a feeling I am being reprimanded for things that were said by Ecclestone. Is this an attempt to avoid a confrontation with Ecclestone? Am I an easier target than



Ferrari: "Lauda let his own interests take priority over those of the team. . . ."

Ecclestone?"

Ferrari: "No, you cannot accuse me of being cowardly. You are picking on me because you cannot do so with Ecclestone"! (Hang on, who's picking on who?)

Minini: "I am prepared to challenge you in the presence of Mr Ecclestone".

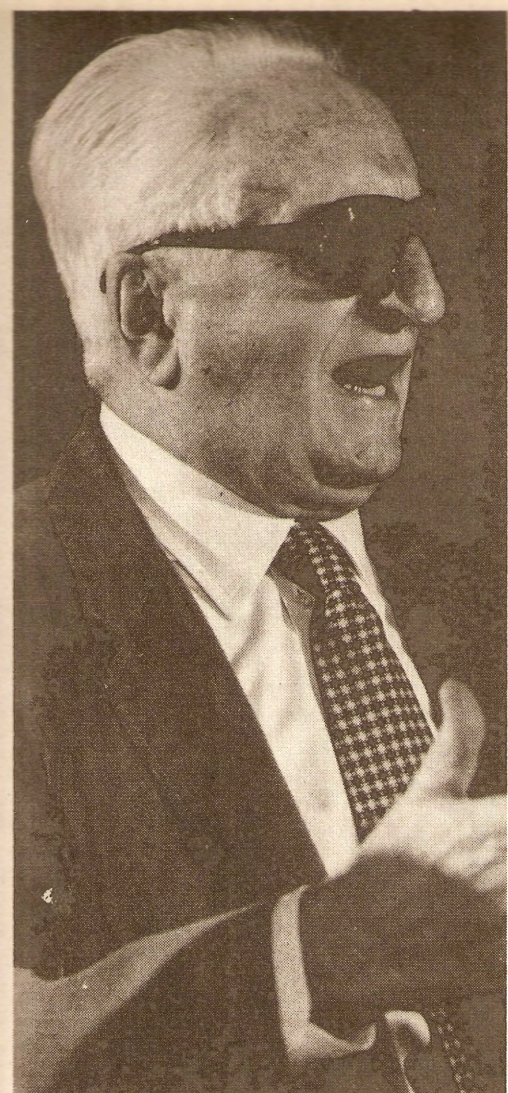
Ferrari (sure it would never happen): "I would only welcome such an opportunity . . ."

Naturally he fired broadsides at his favourite hates; F1CA, the CSI, non-industry sponsors and Goodyear: "We went to Holland and at scrutineering found two illegal cars; in Spain they voided our practice times because our aerofoil was 1.2mm too wide. Yet we never protested. I suggested to my staff they should not appeal but say aloud what they think is being done. F1CA warned us about this but I have disregarded their warning.

"Why wasn't there the usual trial lap before the start in Austria? Why did Ecclestone approach the start officials urging them to give an immediate start? We could not make the usual warm-up lap . . . the truth is that the organisers and sports officials do not do their duty—in view of this I have taken the line that when Ferrari race, Ferrari race for themselves, and I shall look after their interests and I don't mind who I hurt in the process—never mind about F1CA! . . . Ecclestone is just another participant, as is Ferrari."

He took pains not to clash with Alfa Romeo: "Efforts to create a confrontation between Ferrari and Alfa Romeo are wasted. I left Alfa Romeo in 1939 but my feelings have not changed. I am (not one) who leaves a company and takes it upon himself to criticise or not to recognise what he received. I was born at Alfa Romeo" as their Mr Fittipaldi of the 20s " . . . and I shall never criticise my 'mother' . . ."

Then the CSI and non-industrial sponsors



"The deterioration in the morality of Formula 1 was brought about by those who use the racing car as a means of publicity. . . ."

Ferrari on Formula 1

continued

caught it: "The deterioration in the morality of Formula 1 was not brought about by the participants but by those who use the racing car as a means of publicity . . . and have been accepted by the CSI. The CSI abolished the national colours—when you reach the stage that the names of cigarettes, contraceptives, milk, etc, substitute those of the makers on the cars, what morality is there left in racing? What morality is there when a driver asks a half million in rewards? It was they who polluted our sport!"

Then Goodyear: "If Goodyear wanted us to win the World Championship it would have been very easy for them to enable us to do so. All we required was that they fulfilled correctly the four-year contract which called for a vast choice of tyres. Instead we have always been forced to choose the only type of tyres which suited everybody else. . . ."

"There are three manufacturers—Goodyear, and Michelin already making F1 tyres. For several years we have co-operated with Michelin, their VR, TRX and other types are used almost exclusively on our road cars. There are rumours that Pirelli, who already make excellent tyres, have in mind to make F1 tyres too. Whether or not we shall change our tyre suppliers depends on whether M. Francois

Michelin will agree to supply us"—within days of course, he did, but in that quote there is no palm whatsoever for Goodyear.

More positively he announced: "Ferrari are looking into the possibility of making a 1500cc engine with turbocharging . . . we believe it is our duty to look into this possibility as it would be an engine with an entirely new concept but would have some of the characteristics found in the existing V6 1500. . . ." Later, at the T3 launch he was more specific: "We are programming a thorough development of the current boxer in addition to the 1500 with compressor. We shall decide after the first races of 1978 whether or not to use the turbocharged engine, which has now been running on the bench for several months more efficiently than the engine we have been using so far. . . ."

On the T3 itself, while emphasising that the car unveiled was very much a prototype whose specification and appearance could change dramatically before its race debut, he commented: "You ask if the T3 will make her first appearance in Argentina? This will certainly be so should she prove to be better than the T2, but if this were the case it means that I underpay my staff! . . ."

On drivers, in September: "Today I am driver-hungry . . . you have to work to create drivers today. We have this duty, or burden, whichever way you look at it, but you know what Lauda was like when he joined us. I maintain there are no first and second drivers . . . as far as I am concerned I consider the top driver the one who wins the Sunday race. . . . Before the Dutch GP and again before Monza, Reutemann asked me what he should do at these races. . . . I replied that he should defend his chance and capability.

"But I know what disadvantages there are in having two cocks in the same chickenhouse. We saw the dust raised by Lauda and Regazzoni in the British GP." When he added he had five or six drivers in mind to take Lauda's place it was suggested he had said he was hungry, but here before him lay a banquet.

"Unfortunately," he responded, "my illness prevents me from eating fancy food—I can eat only semolina and tapioca."

In November with Villeneuve joining Reutemann, the Old Man chose his words with care: "Reutemann is now free of that moral bond he had for Lauda. We shall see now what he is capable of. I have engaged Villeneuve because I am told he is extremely capable. If it is too early to express an opinion of him he has been unlucky, but I feel he has the requisites to grow up. Cheever? I do not know whether he will race with us. Cheever is in a great hurry to get to the top quickly. If his programmes coincide with our own, all will be well. Otherwise we shall have to see. We do not ask anyone to believe in us—who who does not trust us is free to go his own way. . . ."

Stagno, sports boss of Italian TV, tried to create a good impression by complimenting Ferrari on his T3 and commenting how good it was to see the Old Man, at his advanced age, could still generate offspring. "Who told you my secret?" laughed Ferrari, but Stagno was stung into splendid *double entendre* as a reply: "If we were on TV, I would have cut you already!"

Still Maranello's racing activities are secondary to what has become a very large production company, as Enzo Ferrari is at pains to emphasise, throwing light on the Fiat-Ferrari *entente* which began on June 18, 1969. "Since that day there has never been a disagreement between Fiat and myself, nothing has been imposed nor did I ever need to press for favours or understanding. Many gave the wrong interpretation to my resignation last January, but now the truth shall be known.

"I knew I was ill and for the first time I was away from Maranello for 47 consecutive days. I should like to emphasise that under the circumstances Fiat have been very understanding and respectful because although I was appointed Honorary Chairman, no new Chairman, and hence no successor, was appointed. Quite simply the powers of Mr Sguazzini—the Managing Director—have been widened.

"Therefore there is nothing I hold against the people of Turin. I have nothing to ask, but know that when I did ask I was given. . . . I left a company employing 400 workers on their hands, from a production viewpoint, and today Ferrari employ 1250 workers."

But still his team is special: "Racing cars are the sole purpose of my life. Nothing has ever been given free to me. Lauda on my side represented advantages, sorrow and worry. To have him compete against us will merely mean one more competitor. Ferrari have won 22 championships", he lumps sports and GP titles together ". . . and I hope we will win another before I die.

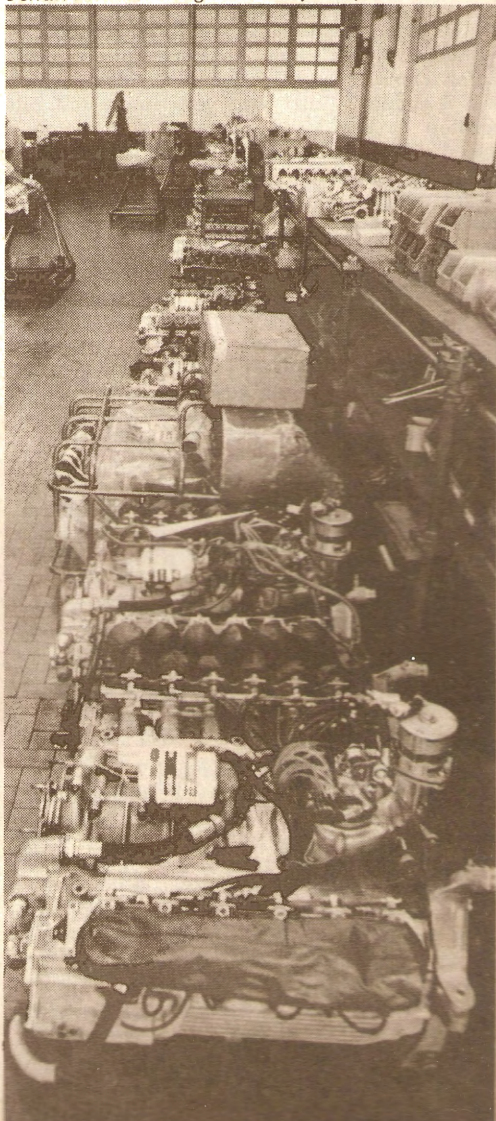
"Since 1950 my Ferrari has shown an Italy which is not solely represented by spaghetti and music. It took abroad the image of a new Italy; that of an Italy based on the endeavour of Italians. The word *Patria*—homeland—still exists in our vocabulary and the homeland is not to be denied, it is to be victorious and honoured in all fields—including sports!

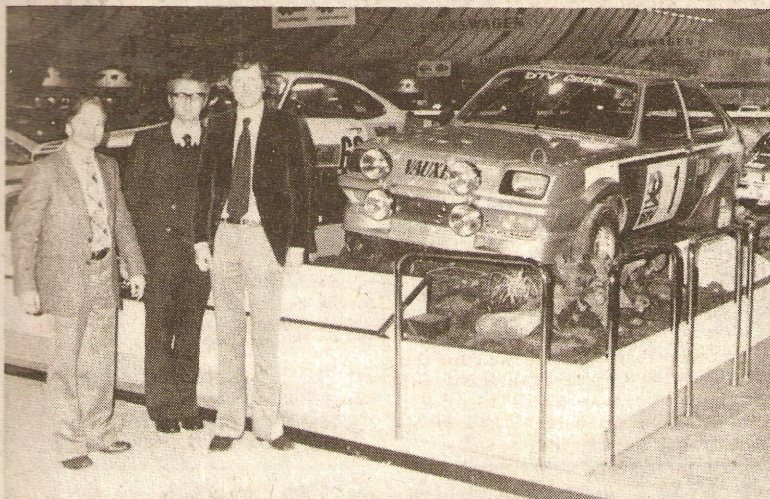
"Here, in this university of craftsmen, work engineers who tomorrow will be in one of the many Fiat plants. We have given Fiat several things, such as the head of the 16-valve 131 which won this year's World Rally Championship, and much other valuable racing experience.

"I no longer have an executive post here—I am the Honorary Chairman who meets with the management once a year. Mr Della Casa is responsible for administration; Mr Lardi is the Personnel Manager; Mr Forghieri is in charge of the research and development department; Mr Rocchi heads the technical department and Mr Bussi runs the experimental department.

"This team of managers will not be changed as I have no reason to bring about any changes. I repeat—Hands Off the company! You may attack me all you wish, but leave The Team alone!"

Ferrari Formula 1 engines in the factory.





Bill Blydenstein, Martin Holmes and Chris Sclater (pictured from left) went to the Brussels Motor Show where the European Chevette was on the Vauxhall stand.

Chris heads for Europe

During 1977 the Vauxhall Chevette rally car became a regular and very popular sight on British rallies but, apart from a visit to the 1000 Lakes, was rarely seen abroad. Things will be very different in 1978 as, in addition to plans already announced for Pentti Airikkala to do some World Championship events, Chris Sclater will be campaigning one of the cars on about ten continental events.

Chris and Martin Holmes will once again be paired up for an interesting and imaginative programme that will surely boost the car's sales on the continent. The idea was originally instigated by Bill Blydenstein and GM Europe and has turned into a team called DTV/Castrol Europe and based in Antwerp.

The rallies definitely lined up for Chris at the moment are the Boucles de Spa, the 24 Hours of Ypres, the Criterium Lucien Bianchi all in Belgium and the Tulip Rally in Holland. Apart from these definite dates the other proposed rallies are the Portuguese (where DTV are going anyway with a car for Pentti), the San Remo and Four Regions in Italy and the Mille Pistes and Tour de France in France. However, Chris did point out that these events could be

altered, depending on how things go on the first few rallies. The programme is very flexible and, although it will be partly supported by Vauxhall dealers in the respective countries, the team is hoping to find a large outside sponsor for the whole series.

Chris will not be chasing any particular championship but, if he suddenly finds himself with a fair amount of ECR points, may decide differently. As he remarked to us, "I have got a budget to do a programme and once things get moving I shall see what happens".

He is starting off with his RHD car from the RAC Rally, which has been rebuilt, and hopes to have at least another shell on hand by the time they have done three events.

Running the operation and acting as team manager will be Belgian Vic Heylen. Vic has been associated with GM for seven years and more recently was running their team of three racing Magnums on the continent (these are the ones that have done particularly well in the Spa 24 Hours races).

The only sad thing for Chris about the plans is that he will be missing rallying in this country. But if time allows he still hopes to be able to fit in a few British events.

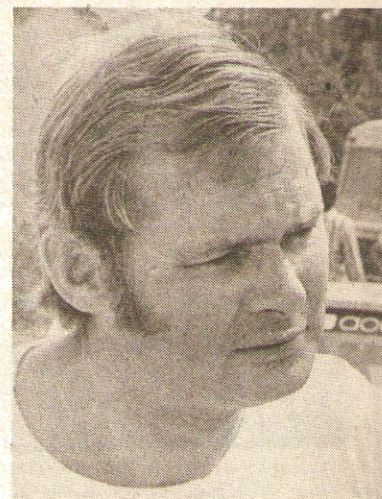
Gilbert for Galway

Although it looked at first as though a date clash with the Swedish and Gwynedd Rallies could affect entries for the Galway Rally, news from the organisers came this week of some very interesting drivers. David Sutton is well known for setting up interesting deals and he has certainly come up trumps again by acquiring the services of top Belgian driver Gilbert Staepelaere to drive an RS1800 there for him.

Staepelaere has won countless tarmac rallies in an Escort and, although this is not the pace note type of event to which he is more accustomed, it will be fascinating to see how this tarmac ace gets on in Ireland. David is, in fact, running three cars on the event with another RS1800 for Jill Robinson, a regular and successful competitor in Ireland, and a Group 1 RS2000 for David Robbins.

Also going over from this country will be John Taylor and Phil Short in the Haynes of Maidstone RS1800. Although John retired in spectacular fashion on the event last year, he came second on it in 1976.

Entries received from Irish drivers include Derek McMahon (Avenger), David Agnew (VW Scirocco), Bertie Fisher (RS1800), John Lyons



Staepelaere—a rare rally visit away from the Continent.

(RS2000), Ronnie McCartney (RS1800) and Fred Patterson who might well be in the ex-Warbold BMW2002 rallied last year by David Agnew.

Irish Sunbeam

A Chrysler Sunbeam was out on a road rally in Ireland at the weekend, surely the car's competition debut. The car was in the capable hands of Dessie McCartney who had this 2-litre version built at Derek McMahon's Donegal premises.

It seems that the McCartney brothers have had the car built to compete on navigation and forest rallies in Northern Ireland and, although they did not get a good placing at the weekend, Dessie was delighted with the car's performance. It is being run in Group 2 form and has 2-litre Avenger running gear.

While Dessie is running this car it seems that Ronnie has a selection of Escorts that he will be using in 1978, including a 2-litre MkII for the Irish tarmac championship and this weekend's Holfeld Pump Rally '78.

The Group 1-winning Avenger used by Ronnie last year has been sold to George Robinson, who rallied a 1600 pushrod Escort. As well as getting ready for the coming rally season Ronnie did some hot rod races over the Christmas period and won two races at Castlederg on the Tuesday after Christmas.

Opel's Swedish trio

It was a very good weekend in Sweden for Opel as, on the first round of the national championship, the Bergslag Rally, on Friday night, they took the first three places with Kadett GTEs.

The rally was won by Anders Kullang on 285mins 45secs who took over the lead five stages from the end from Stig Blomqvist in a 16-valve Saab 99EMS. Stig took the lead when he was 20secs quicker than Anders on a long 75 kilometre stage, but then on the very next stage his engine went. The other Saab, a Group 1 car for Per Eklund, also retired when Per left the road and destroyed a lower wishbone.

It seems that the event was not a complete disaster for Saab as, after Per retired, he continued on the event testing a Turbo, and all the signs from this are quite encouraging.

There were also quite a few rally 'personalities' out watching the event and Bjorn Waldegaard and Hannu Mikkola ended up driving the course car.

The top four were: 1, Anders Kullang (Opel Kadett GTE Group 2), 285mins 45secs penalties; 2, Bror Danielsson (Opel Kadett GTE Group 1), 287:18; 3, Bjorn Johansson (Opel Kadett GTE), 294:51; 4, Bengt Thorsell (BMW 2002), 298:11.

Hämäläinen for the Open

In 1977 Peter Clarke brought Kyosti Hämäläinen (right) to this country to do the Welsh and Scottish in a Group 1 RS2000 and now he is planning to run him during 1978 in the Open Championship in a Group 4 RS1800. Peter is at the moment negotiating with two major national companies for sponsorship of this car which will be run from his premises in Skipton.

Peter Clarke Autos will have quite a busy programme on their hands rallywise, as they are also running a Group 1 RS2000 in the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Championship for Peter himself and an Escort in the 1300 Championship in the Esso/BTRDA Series.

As yet he has not got a driver for the 1300 car and is looking for a young up and coming driver to run. Anyone who is interested in this drive should write to Peter at Peter Clarke Autos, Carleton New Road, Skipton, North Yorkshire, stating their experience after which a test day will be held in February.

Co-drivers for the team will be Philip Boland, who will be going with Kyosti, and Howard Scott, who will be going



Clubmen plan meeting

Members of Team Knowdale are keen to make sure that something is sorted out before the 1978 Lombard RAC Rally concerning the Clubmans Trophy entries, which caused so much ill feeling this year when competitors felt the RAC had treated them unfairly by putting too many foreign entries in the main event. To this end they are planning a meeting on Sunday, January 29.

Porter, Jack Kemsley, Brian Culcheth, Peter Bryant and Nigel Raeburn and discuss just what can be done for this year. The clubmen will be attending a meeting at 11am to sort out just what they want prior to the main meeting at 2pm. The meeting will be held at the Post House Hotel, nr Wakefield at junction 40 on the M1. Anyone interested in attending should write to John

Ford announce 1978 programme

Castrol sponsorship for WCR team—All cars to be run from Boreham

In London last Wednesday it was Ford's turn to take the lid off their plans for 1978 and, although there were no revelations, Stuart Turner and Peter Ashcroft were able to answer all the questions that had been asked over recent months as to what the team would be doing this year.

Having chosen the press conference prior to the RAC Rally to announce their biggest piece of news—the return of Hannu Mikkola to the fold—the company still left it until Wednesday to announce whether they would be trying for the World Championship again: the answer is no but their three WCR drivers (Hannu Mikkola, Ari Vatanen and Bjorn Waldegaard) will be competing on at least five rounds between them.

Peter Ashcroft reeled off a long list of events for a total of five drivers—Hannu, Ari, Bjorn, Roger Clark and Russell Brookes—all of whom will have their cars prepared and run out of Boreham. No matter how one looks at the programme, it is going to be another very busy year for the 25 full time employees at Boreham.

Stuart Turner was very keen to point out that they had enjoyed their 1977 battle with Fiat—whom he felt had won the championship fair and square—but that they did not intend to contest the series again no matter what the results of the first few rallies were.

The WCR line-up that Peter Ashcroft outlined was as follows: Bjorn, again with regular co-driver Hans Thorszelius, will be doing the Swedish, Portuguese and RAC Rallies and the *Criterium du Quebec* plus one other; Hannu and Arne Hertz will be doing the Swedish, 1000 Lakes, and the RAC Rallies, the *Criterium du Quebec*, plus one other. Ari and Peter Bryant will be doing the Swedish, 1000 Lakes and RAC Rallies, *Criterium du Quebec*, plus one other. Although no sponsors were announced for these cars Peter Ashcroft is at the moment negotiating with a number of interested parties.

As well as his home programme, Russell also has some foreign events—the Total Rally in South Africa, the Rally of the South Pacific in New Zealand, the Cyprus Rally and the Tulip Rally.

Summing up this international programme Peter Ashcroft's comment was, "Though we don't plan at this stage to contest the whole World Rally Championship, we do feel that our international programme is a fairly comprehensive one, and we have accordingly selected a strong team with wide ranging talents. It is possible that we shall expand this international involvement slightly as the season progresses with another car here and there, but the programme as it stands includes the events most suitable for the Escort and in the marketing areas we're interested in reaching". Could this possibly mean a ray of hope that we could see the likes of Jean Pierre Nicolas in Corsica again?

It will be nice for British fans to have Roger back on the home scene and, with Jim Porter, he will be doing the Open series in a Group 4 RS1800 backed by the Allied Polymer Group and Esso. Russell, although he will be moving his set-up to Boreham, will still have support from Andrews Heat for Hire and co-driver for most events will be John Brown. Russell will still be backed by Castrol for his rallying and, along with him this year, the firm will also be sponsoring the efforts of the rest of the contracted drivers—taking over from Shell.



Waldegaard—five WCR rounds.



Mikkola—WCR and Open series.



Vatanen—WCR and Finnish rallies.

Although Hannu will be joining Roger and Russell for the series, he will only be able to do five rounds, so will be missing the Circuit and Manx due to WCR commitments. Two other regular Escort drivers who will be out in the Open series in Group 4 vehicles, but with cars not run out of Boreham, will be John Taylor and Graham Elsmore.

John continues his long association with Haynes of Maidstone and Shell and will be out on all the events with Phil Short. John will also be doing a considerable amount of rallycross development for Ford with the 1600cc Fiesta.

Just before the 1977 RAC Rally Joffin Taylor, started some development with Kugel Fischer injection. It seems that, so far, this has been a fairly successful exercise and once John has completed more testing the cars will all use this injection.

Last year Thomas Motors ran a Group 1 RS2000 for Graham, but this year it will be a Group 4 RS1800 for him loaned by Boreham.

It seems that Ford have not forgotten Malcolm Wilson's sterling efforts last year in the County Garages of Carlisle RS2000 and, although Peter Ashcroft was quite vague about exactly how they would be helping Malcolm in 1978, he did announce that he would be doing the Open series again in a Group 1 car run by County Garages. As we went to press however, details were still very vague as even Malcolm had not the faintest idea what he would be doing this year!

One of the regular Finns who will be missing from the British scene this year will be Ari, who will be contesting the Mantta 200 (January 21-22), Arctic Rally (February 3-5) and Hankiralli (February 17-19) in Finland with a Boreham built RS1800 with Marlboro sponsorship. He will also have Marlboro backing for the 1000 Lakes and RAC Rallies.

Another Finn who did well for the team in '77 was Kyosti Hämäläinen and he will be doing the 1000 Lakes again. Also Benny Fernandez will be doing the Portuguese Rally for them.

Rightly or wrongly many women drivers feel that they are hard done by by the manufacturers and Ford are very keen to play their part in finding another Pat Moss. They are, therefore, holding a special ladies' day at the rally school later in the year and anyone interested should write to Paul English at the Ford Rallye Sport Club at Arisdale Avenue, South Ockendon, Essex who will pass these applications on to Stuart Turner and Peter Ashcroft.

The normal rally schools will carry on in 1978 with series run in Yorkshire this month, Scotland in March, Northern Ireland in the spring and the south of England in the summer. They will also be going over to the continent for schools in Belgium and Holland. The instructors will be Russell Brookes, Andy Dawson, Will Sparrow and John Taylor, with Bjorn and Hannu sitting in from time to time and, when the school visits Belgium, Gilbert Staepelaere will be helping out.

An addition to each school will be a co-drivers' section run by Jim Porter and so at every school there will be 12 places for drivers and six places for co-drivers with the respective charges being £43 and £27. Any interested co-drivers should get in touch with Paul English.

With motor clubs in mind the Rallye Sport Club will be running a Motor Sport Challenge. The rounds of this will involve a rally teach-in, inter-club competitive rally orientated activities, a quiz and a forum, but more details are yet to come. Motor clubs will also be able to get free of charge a new booklet entitled 'How to Run a Rally'. Another new publication out this year, but not free of charge, will be 'Escort Rally Preparation', which will be sold through Rallye Sport dealers.

As we have mentioned many times since its announcement, the Escort 1300 Championship has had an overwhelming response. The latest plan from Ford is to run subsidiary championships so that all those who have built cars will get a run. Also following Russell's testing, they have decided to use the Dunlop 165 SR-13 tyre which is in fact termed an MS (India) brand. This tyre is available from Dunlop direct by contacting John Horton or Andrew Haill on 021-373 2121 who will only supply these tyres to drivers who have registered with them and the BTRDA and have a confirmed entry for a round of the championship. Russell found that the tyre was quick and safe and it is also relatively cheap, at £14.50 each. A tyre service will be provided on all events through Jim Fullwood Tyre Centre Ltd, Comet Service station, Ditherington, Shrewsbury, but competitors must have got their tyres before the event and not rely on the Fullwood service to supply them. Dunlop are offering a bonus of 12, ten and eight radial rally tyres of the competitors choice for the first three overall in this championship at the end of the year.

Pentti's car for sale

Dealer Team Vauxhall have got one of their rally Chevettes up for sale. The car on offer is the one built for Pentti Airikkala for the 1000 Lakes and since then has only been used on the Manx (which it won) and the RAC. Although the car is a LHD model, Team Manager Gerry Johnstone assures us that it could easily be converted to RHD and anyone interested should contact him at DTV's headquarters at Shepreth.

Peter goes it alone

With Russell Brookes's RS1800 being prepared and run from Boreham in 1978, his regular chief mechanic, Peter Harrison, will be without this regular job. Peter will not be without work, however, as he is forming his own competition car preparation centre in Wolverhampton and is already busy on Graham Elsmore's car for the Open series. Peter, who used to work in engine development projects for the Rover Division of British Leyland, can be contacted on Wolverhampton 58111.

Therier takes over

Team Toyota Europe have announced that the seat vacated in their team by Hannu Mikkola to drive a 2-litre Celica in World Championship events has been filled by French driver Jean-Luc Therier. His first event for them will be the Swedish and then after that he will do all the WCR events that they have yet to decide on.

Fiat one-two

As well as the opening round of the Swedish national rally championship taking place at the weekend, the Finnish '12 round national series got under way with the Riirimaki Rally. Whereas in Sweden it had been an Opel benefit, in Finland it was a Fiat success story with their 131 Abarths for Timo Salonen and Markku Alen finishing first and second.

The rally was held in the town of Riirimaki 60 kilometres north of Helsinki on Saturday night and 127 crews took part in the 200 kilometre event which included 100 kilometres of stages. Salonen won by 1min 6secs from Alen, who was a further minute ahead of I. Laine in a Saab 96 and fourth was Ulf Gronholm in an Opel Kadett GTE.

Holfeld Rally

The Holfeld Pump Rally '78 takes place in the Wicklow area this Saturday with leading entries from Ronnie McCartney in an RS1800 and Will Sparrow in a Mini.

The rally starts from the Grand Hotel in Wicklow at midday and the first car is due back for the finish at 7.20 in the evening.

There are numerous spectator points on the 16-stage rally and a total of four service halts.



Igor Bolshih in his Moskvich on another event in the summer.

Russian about

The exciting competition in the Peace and Friendship Trophy (Eastern European Championship) ended in the Soviet Union at the Russian Winter Rally. The competitors could not have wished for a more typical Russian winter: snow and ice—with temperatures down to minus 25 degrees centigrade.

The rally started in Moscow but, to make the thousands of long road touring distances seem shorter and more interesting, the rally used the concentration system of starting points in different towns, like the Monte Carlo Rally. The Polish, East German, Hungarian, Czech and some local Russian teams started at Lvov in the west of the country, while the Bulgarians, Romanians and several other Soviet teams started in Kishinow in the South. Both routes lead towards Kiev, the Ukrainian metropolis where there was a compulsory break and a speed test, the first competitive section. A few years ago 3 kilometres outside the town, in a lovely wood, a superb motordrome was built complete with all facilities such as generously built pits, a control tower and hotel and this provided a venue for the speed tests.

After the speed test the whole rally moved to Moscow for a two-day rest halt. The mechanics were allowed to overhaul the cars before the rally proper began. There was no *parc ferme*, and co-drivers were able to drive along the secret sections of the route to make a few sketches. The real rally began with an ice race in the Hippodrome, the central horserace track in the middle of Moscow, followed by a 22-hour non-stop journey of 1160 km, which was in the form of a three-lap circuit of about 400 km. Fourteen special stages were chosen to sort out the results of the event, always on ice and snow, and were more of a bobsleigh race than a car rally, with high snowbanks beside the roads. There was a ban on studded tyres which did not make the driving easy and there were strict checks on the tyres by officials. For the non-Soviet drivers these conditions were just as demanding as those in Finland and the local drivers were beginning to dominate the event just as the Finns do in their own country.

The relatively unknown Bolshih brothers won with ease with their IZS Moskvich, prepared in the Moskvich factory at Izschewsk where Stasis Brundza is a chief engineer. The fastest and most promising newcomers to Soviet rallysport could not repeat last year's victory, but in the following places appeared unknown drivers such as Antropow (2nd), Toltzow (5th), and Ganin (9th). Reimanis Varenko and



Igor Bolshih.

Elizarow were other unknown drivers who have not been seen at previous Peace and Friendship events but who were able to show they have the necessary skills for success as rallydrivers, while the only other established Russian drivers present were Brundza and Agitsohev. The Polish driver Marian Bublewicz with his private Polski Fiat 125p caused the biggest surprise of the event among the local drivers: it is considered very difficult for foreign drivers to make the top ten places in Russian International rallies. He came tenth! The likely Peace and Friendship champion Vaclav Blahna from Czechoslovakia drove very carefully, never taking a risk since he only had to reach the finish ahead of Petkov, Pavlik and Agitshev to win. The Skoda driver had a good run over the icerun, making seventh best time overall, but otherwise he went slowly. His only trouble was that he took the wrong road on one section and, in trying to make up the lost time, went off the road into a ditch. This led to a penalty of 1min and dropped him down to 13th place overall. Fortunately for him the Bulgarian Petkov, now nearest rival, was 16th with his Shiguli (Lada) and although Agitshev finished eighth place overall this did not give the Russian enough points to overtake the Czech in the series.

ANDREAS FEILER

1, Igor Bolshih/Nikolai Bolshih (Moskvich 2140), 4225:3; 2, Konstantin Antropov/V. Kukovianki (Moskvich 2140), 4255:4; 3, Aleksandr Varenko/A. Kozirtschikov (Shiguli 1600), 4326:4; 4, Andris Reimanis/Andris Zwingewitch (Shiguli 1600), 4365:3; 5, Vladimir Toltzov/Sergei Schlin (Shiguli 1600), 4413:8; 6, Nikolai Elizarov/Valentin Grigorov (Shiguli 1600), 4422:8.

Esso/BTRDA organisers

For competitors in the 1978 Esso/BTRDA Rally Championship, Esso have issued a list of the individual event organisers, who are as follows: Tyreservices Dukeries National (March 11), Harold White, 55 Carterknowle Avenue, Sheffield, S11 9FT, tel: Sheffield 56829; Esso Plains Rally (April 8), Alan Leigh, 422 London Road, Davenham, Northwich, Cheshire; Esso South West Stages (May 6), Mrs Myra Cater, 59 Ashleigh Road, Exmouth, Devon; Weatherill Centurion Rally (May 27), Chas Naples, 25 Eddington Grove, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE5 1JG, tel: Newcastle upon Tyne 677629; Bath Festival Rally (June 9/10), Mrs Pauline Conningham, 7 Castle View, Entry

Hill, Bath; Esso Rali Bro Myrddin (June 24), Ian Jenkins, Afallon, Dryslwyn, Carmarthen, Dyfed, SA32 8QY, tel: Dryslwyn 221 (day) 373 (night); Border Counties '78 (July 15), J. MacFarlane, 6 Abbotsford Terrace, 'Darnick, Melrose, Roxburghshire; Halewood Stages (August 20), Lee Vincent, 14 Ffordd-y-Gollen, Tonteg, Pontypridd, Mid Glamorgan, tel: Newtown Lantwit 6522; Bowmaker Autumn Stages (September 23), Ken Rundle, 1 Woodlands Court, Newbridge, Dumfries, tel: Newbury 628; SKF Stages (October 8), Howard Spencer, 20 Four Acres Walk, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, tel: Hemel Hempstead 67992.

Briefly . . .

● The tyre that Dunlop are making available for competitors in the Mazda Hatchback series is the 165 SR-13 (Dunlop) brand which will be available at a fixed price for the whole year. They also have a racing tyre for tarmac surfaces (£24 each plus VAT). The bonuses for the first three Dunlop users at the end of the series will be ten, eight and six radial rally tyres of the competitor's choice. All competitors must register with John Horton or Andrew Haill at Dunlop, Fort Dunlop, Erdington, Birmingham, B24 9QT.

● At the beginning of 1978 Ron Padwicke will be seen again in his usual 1600cc Chrysler Avenger in the Sedan Products Open Championship, but as soon as the 1600cc Sunbeam is homologated he hopes to replace his car with the newer model. Co-driving for Ron on most internationals will be Andy Gardiner and he also hopes that he will be able to do some of the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Championship rounds. He will again be sponsored by TMS Accessories and have additional support from Worcester Source and the Castle Hotel in Glen Devon, Perthshire.

● It is always nice to see something different to the usual gaggle of Escorts on rallies and a Mini Cooper 'S' with a 1293 engine being entered on the rounds of the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Championship in the hands of a Motorway Traffic Policeman is definitely different! Driver of this car is Tom Bradley, who, with co-driver John Rook, has managed to get sponsorship from the Yorkshire Bottle Company for the next two years. Tom and John have built the car themselves and, due to some work still to be done on the engine, will have to miss the Gwynedd, but they hope to be out on all the other rounds except the Ulster.

● Being printed at the moment are regulations for the City of Truro Stages Rally on Sunday, February 19. The event starts from Mumfords Garage in Truro and finishes at the Talk of the West in St Agnes. There are 30 miles of stages in the 130 mile route for an entry fee of £15. Regulations are available from S.G.P. Geoghegan, Kelly Bray, Trevaunance Close, St Agnes, Cornwall.

● The County Hotel in Llandudno are offering discount on accommodation for this year's Gwynedd Rally, and any interested competitors should ring them on Llandudno 78711. The County and the Windermere Hotel in Windermere are both owned by LG Hotels and the management of both places welcome the use of their hotels as rally HQs and would also be prepared to part-sponsor rallies.

● If anyone is still interested in running a car in the Mazda Hatchback series in the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Championship, he has one last chance as one deal to run a car has fallen through. Consequently David Palmer at Mazda Car Imports has a car available and any competitor who would like this car should contact him at Tunbridge Wells 34431.

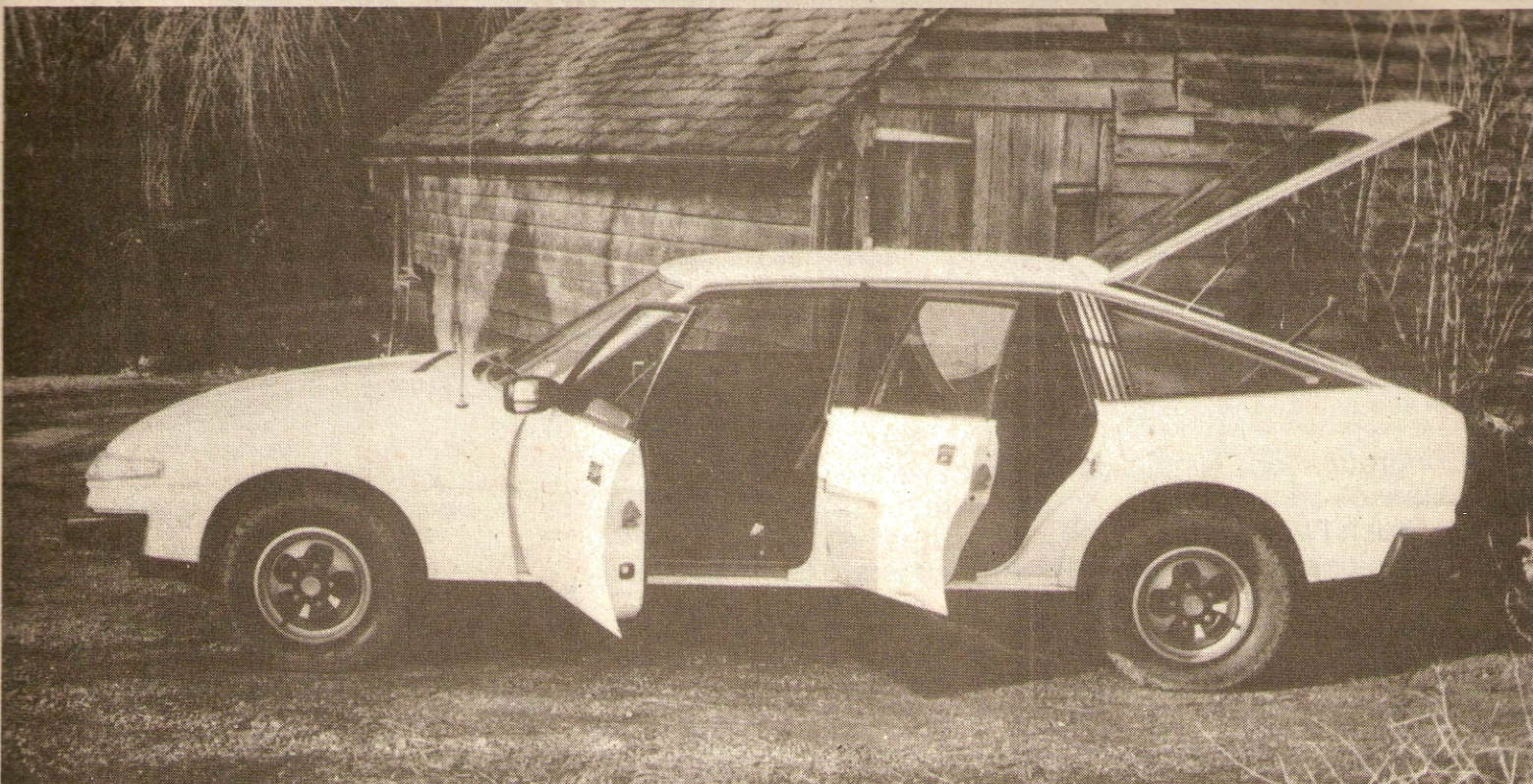
● If any road or stage rally drivers are still without co-drivers for the coming season they might be able to team up with Peter Forrester for the year or one-off events. Peter prefers road rallying but has stage experience and can be contacted on Kildgrove 3511 extension 624 during the day or Alsager 4255 at night.

● Paul Windsor from Liverpool and Brian Goff from Chester, are to contest most of the Irish Tarmac Championship rounds next year in a 2-litre Escort which at one time was driven by Markku Alen. First event will be the Galway Rally in February and they are being sponsored for the entire season in the series by David Rees & Co Ltd, shipping merchants from Liverpool.

● Dunlop have come up with a tyre bonus for the Esso/BTRDA Gold Star Championship overall which is separate to that for the Escort series. After each round the first three highest-placed Dunlop users in each capacity class will be allowed a discount of 50, 30 and 20 per cent respectively off their next set of tyres. At the end of the championship the top three Dunlop users will get ten, eight and six free radial rally tyres of their choice. Competitors must register with Dunlop before the first round and sign a form at documentation for each round saying they are using Dunlops. Any queries on this should be directed to John Horton at Dunlop, Fort Dunlop, Erdington, Birmingham, B24 9QT.

● On Thursday, January 19, Nigel Raeburn is starting a series of rallying navigation evening classes covering all aspects of co-driving and navigation. Anyone interested should contact Wythenshawe Adult Education Centre, The Birtles, Wythenshawe Town Centre, Manchester, M22 5RF, tel: 061 437 1231.

● Each year Halda award the gold 'Halda Co-Driver Trophy' to a leading co-driver who has done particularly well during the season, and for 1977 this has gone to Alain Mahe, the regular partner of Bernard Darniche in the Chardonnet Lancia Stratos. Previous winners of the trophy include Hans Thorszelius.



The sleek Rover 2600 features four wide-opening doors and a large hatchback.

Delightfully effortless

As is now well known, the 6-cylinder Triumphs and 4-cylinder Rovers have been phased out, to be replaced by smaller-engined versions of the Rover 3500. Rationalisation is the name of the game, a single body shell sufficing for all the Rover models, the power units, in addition to the existing light-alloy V8, being two all-new straight-sixes of 2300 and 2600cc.

These engines differ only in crank throw and both have an overhead-camshaft, driven by a toothed belt. This operates the inlet valves directly through piston-type tappets, with rockers commanding the inclined exhausts. Twin SU carburettors look after the breathing and the crankshaft has only four main bearings, in the interest of reduced friction. The test car had the larger of the two engines, which is in unit with a 5-speed synchromesh gearbox.

The front suspension has MacPherson geometry and the test car was fitted with the optional power-assisted rack and pinion steering. A live rear axle is located by a short torque tube and a Watt's linkage; self-levelling struts avoid a tail-down attitude under full load. Servo-assisted brakes have discs in front and drums behind. Apart from the engine, the only differences from the 3500 are the slightly lower gearing—though still high enough to make fifth a genuine overdrive—and a small reduction in tyre section.

The Rover is a big, impressive car, with four wide doors and a large, well-carpeted luggage boot beneath the hatchback tail. The interior is spacious and the rear passengers have plenty of room, unless the driver is tall and pushes his seat right back. Actually, the squabs of the front seats are perhaps unnecessarily thick and more knee-room could be found by slimming them a little; the rear seat is very wide and the central arm-rest may be folded for three passengers to be carried.

Entry is easy through the front or rear doors, but in winter the mudguarding is not very efficient and it is easy to get mud on one's

ly dirty and I had to wash it frequently to keep it looking respectable. The adjustable steering wheel allows the driver to find his most comfortable position and the controls are well arranged, with conveniently-spaced pedals. In spite of the long engine, the bonnet is short enough to make traffic driving simple.

The quality of the body has been much improved since I drove the 3500. The fit of the doors is better, the tailgate no longer bursts open at 110mph, and the interior trim is more carefully applied. The engine takes a fair time to warm up and a good deal of fiddling with the choke is necessary during that period.

The new overhead-camshaft engine gives plenty of power and revs very freely. The car is definitely fast and when accelerating through the gears it is almost up to the standard of the 3500. It has the same long-legged feel as that

car, cruising very easily at any chosen speed, which may be a legal 70mph or a naughty 100mph, depending on the view in the mirror. The long wheelbase gives good stability and the rear axle is unusually well-behaved on bumpy corners.

While the 2600 is at its best on long, fast journeys, it is perhaps less at home on slower roads and in traffic. This is partly because the engine is disappointingly noisy when pressed in the gears, and the gearbox contributes to the general commotion, especially in first and second. That would matter less if there were more low-speed torque, but the machine is somewhat lethargic if one hangs on to the higher gears. When I took delivery, there was a colossal flat-spot in the carburation, which made traffic driving a nightmare. I refilled the dashpots of the carburettors, which effected a great im-

The hatchback tail end still looks rather heavy in comparison to the rest of the car.



provement, but the mixture still seemed on the weak side when the throttles were opened initially; I would have loved to try some different needles in the SU pistons.

Wind noise has been considerably reduced and road noise is seldom noticeable. The gear ratios are very well chosen and there is little difference between the maxima in fourth and fifth, though the latter is naturally quieter and more economical. The gearchange is easy and precise, although not particularly light in action, the selection of reverse demanding some strength, and the clutch pedal is a bit on the heavy side, too.

The roadholding inspires great confidence and the car feels safe on wet roads. I found it very difficult to judge the handling because of that weird abortion of a steering wheel—if you can call something a wheel that's anything but round. I was ashamed to find that a thing so trivial could annoy me so much, but you can't teach an old dog new tricks and, try as I might, I never succeeded in coming to terms with it. All I can say is that I think the power-assisted steering would be excellent with a proper round wheel to control it, and I trust that the present tortured shape will soon go the way of the one on the Allegro.

After that, I'm delighted to give full marks to the heating and ventilation, which work beautifully, are easily controlled, and supply cool breathing air while keeping the toes pleasantly warm. Air from the heater is ducted into the doors to demist the windows, and the blower fan operates quietly. The ride in the front seats is hard at low speeds but becomes more comfortable as the car gets into its stride. The back seat ride is not one of the best features and the passengers are well shaken up when the roads are bad; it should perhaps be mentioned that the test car was on run-flat tyres, which tend to be harder than orthodox equipment.

A fast, heavy car with a low-drag body shape is naturally fairly hard on its brakes, but the Rover 2600 has plenty of stopping power, both when slowing from high speeds and coping with traffic emergencies. I only once had a suspicion of fading and that was when making an extremely rapid descent of Fish Hill, Broadway, which has corner after corner on a steep gradient.

The Rover 2600 is a big car with plenty of performance and a delightfully effortless way of covering the miles or kilometres. It will give better than 20mpg when driven really hard—over 25mpg if handled more gently, which is a virtue that is of great importance these days. For a new 6-cylinder design, however, the engine is surprisingly noisy when pressed and it is slow to respond to the throttle at low speeds. It is in those areas particularly that the new car needs further development, before it can be said to have reached its full potential. ■



Above: The quality of the body has been much improved since we tested the 3500. Below: The wide, low nose.



Specification and performance data

Car Tested: Rover 2600 4-door saloon, price £5800.

Engine: Six cylinders in line, 81x84mm (2597cc). Compression ratio 9.25 to 1. 136bhp DIN at 5000rpm. Single belt-driven overhead camshaft. Twin SU carburettors.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. 5-speed synchromesh gearbox with central change, ratios: 0.833, 1.0, 1.396, 2.087, and 3.21 to 1. Hypoid rear axle, ratio 3.45 to 1.

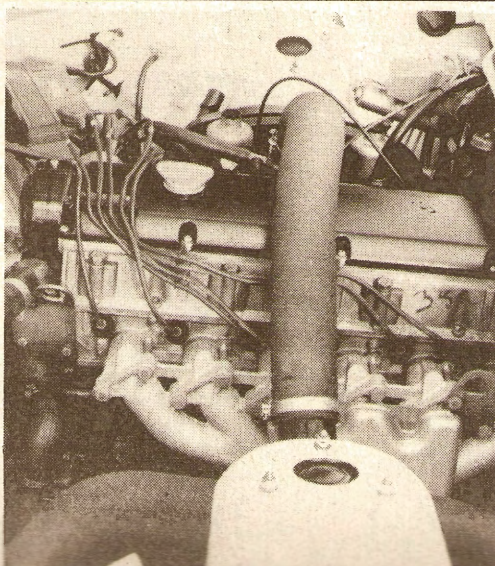
Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis. MacPherson independent front suspension with anti-roll bar. Rack and pinion steering with optional power assistance. Rear axle on coil springs with short torque tube, Watt's linkage, and self-levelling dampers. Servo-assisted dual-circuit disc/drum brakes. Bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 175 HR14 tyres.

Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Oil pressure, water temperature, and fuel gauges. Voltmeter. Clock. Heating, demisting and ventilation system. Heated rear window. Electrical operation of all door windows. 2-speed and intermittent windscreen wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators with hazard warning. Reversing lights.

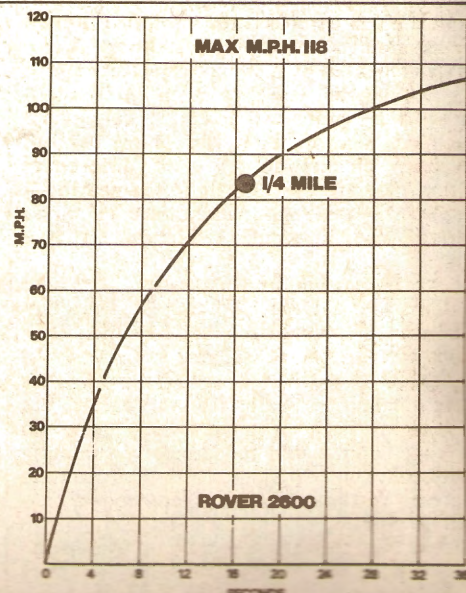
Dimensions: Wheelbase 9ft 2.8ins. Track 4ft 11.1ins. Overall length 15ft 5ins. Width 5ft 9.6ins. Weight 1 ton 6 cwt.

Performance: Maximum speed 118mph. Speeds in gears: fourth 115mph, third 90mph, second 60mph, first 38mph. Standing quarter-mile 17.2s. Acceleration: 0-30mph 3.2s, 0-50mph 6.8s, 0-60mph 9.2s, 0-80mph 15.6s, 0-100mph 28.0s.

Fuel Consumption: 21 to 27mpg.



The straight-six engine was surprisingly noisy.



Toyota Carina and Celica

Toyota announce new body shells for their Carina and Celica models. Greater interior space and increased glass area are features, and in all cases a substantial weight reduction has been achieved.

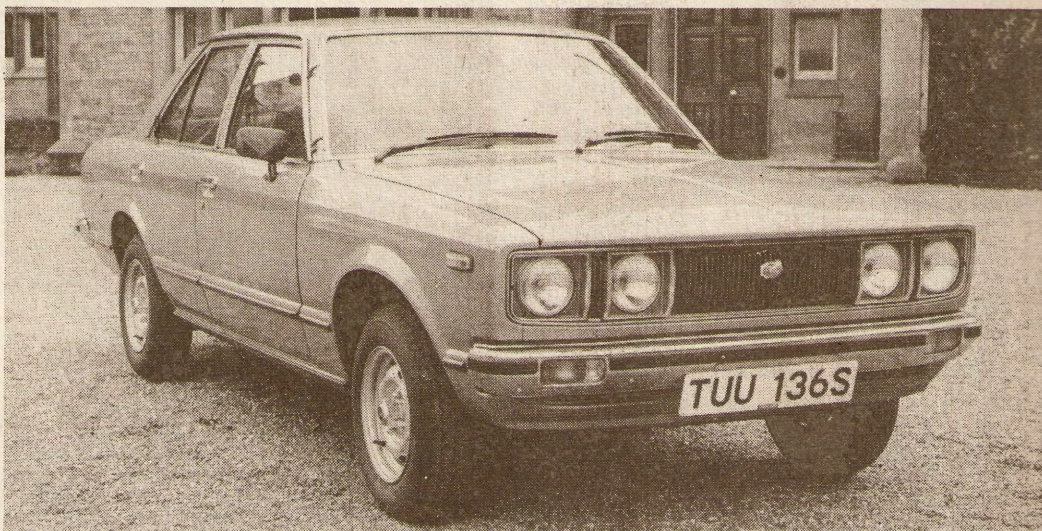
Four engine types, all with 5-bearings and 4-cylinders, are used. For the Carina, both the 4-door saloon and the entirely new 5-door estate, a 1588cc unit is used, with inclined, pushrod-operated valves and a twin-choke downdraught carburetter. On a compression ratio of 9 to 1, it develops 75bhp at 5200rpm. The Celica 1600ST, a sports coupé with a separate boot, has a similar engine with a 9.4 to 1 compression ratio, plus 2 twin-choke downdraught carburetters, which gives 86bhp at 5600rpm.

The 2000cc Celica models have a 4-seater coupé body of streamlined shape, called 'Liftback'. In the case of the 2000ST and the luxurious 2000XT, there is a single overhead-camshaft operating in-line valves and, with a single twin-choke downdraught carburetter and a compression ratio of 8.5 to 1, the power output is 89bhp at 5000rpm. The 2000GT has twin overhead-camshafts and two Solex twin-choke horizontal carburetters. This more ambitious specification and a compression ratio of 9.7 to 1 add up to an impressive 118bhp at 5800rpm, which, like the other outputs quoted, is a DIN figure.

The Carina has a 4-speed synchromesh gearbox or 3-speed automatic transmission. All the Celicas have 5-speed gearboxes and the 2000XT is also available in automatic form. Chassis details include MacPherson front suspension, recirculating ball steering gear, and a live rear axle. In the case of the Carina estate, the axle is on semi-elliptic springs, but for the saloon and all versions of the Celica, there are coil springs and four links.

Prices range from £3180 for the Carina saloon to £4774 for the twin-cam 2000GT.

The Toyota Celica 2000XT utilises a streamlined "liftback" bodyshell somewhat reminiscent of the Buick Skylark.



The new Carina is powered by the 1588cc engine developing 75bhp.

ROAD IMPRESSIONS

I had the opportunity of driving all the new Toyota models but I presumed that AUTO-SPORTS readers would be most interested in the sporting types. Accordingly, I concentrated on the Celica 2000 in ST and twin-cam GT forms. The 2000ST, though of spectacular appearance, is actually a very practical and comfortable four-seater. Like most Japanese cars, it is extremely easy to drive, and all the controls are light in action.

The 5-speed gearbox is truly excellent, and quiet too, while the engine is equally happy when driven gently in the higher gears or revving hard. There is some body boom when the car is pressed to its limit, but it is generally quite refined. The suspension sometimes fidgets a little on inferior road surfaces, but the ride is generally satisfactory. On roads which

were alternately wet and dry, the handling seemed well-balanced if a little lacking in feel.

As for performance, I would guess that the maximum speed is around 100mph, though I saw an indicated 112mph when the gradient was in my favour. This is a car that looks fast and expensive, but mum can use it for shopping, and I like the standard of finish and the way the doors shut.

The twin-cam GT is an altogether faster car. It's not quite so refined, but that is all part of its sporting character. It revs very freely and the engine has enough power to make the live axle hop about a bit in the lower gears. Not quite such a general-purpose car as the ST, it appealed to me particularly because everything under the bonnet was so beautifully laid out. As for the performance, I hope to have one for a full road test fairly soon, so I shall be able to take some accurate figures. ■





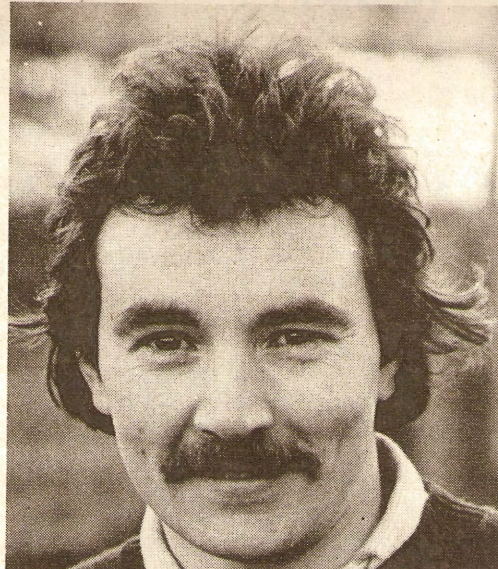
CHRIS DOBSON

Twenty-five-year-old Chris Dobson works in Hastings for the Caffyns garage chain. His competition experience dates back to the 1971 and '72 seasons when he campaigned a 1-litre Mini in local autocross events. During the following two years, he became class champion in the *Kent & Sussex Courier* and ACSMC championships as well as winning the Hastings CC's championship outright. In late '74 Chris went abroad for a while and, on his return, was offered a couple of races in Stephen Hall's 1000cc Mini in the *Kent Messenger* series. Although he was beaten by the rapid Imps, Chris was the first Mini home and decided to buy the car on these results.

Having later parted with the Mini, however, Hall purchased a Merlyn Mk20A with which to go into FF1600 but couldn't get on with the car. Dobson liked the idea of single-seater racing, however, and a part-exchange deal was agreed. Chris found backing from the enthusiastic Pearce Signs concern based in South London and had a few minor placings in a basically uncompetitive car. At the end of the year he decided his ambitions lay with saloons and Pearce Signs acquired a competitive car for him to drive in the 1977 Leyland 1000 Challenge. Reliability was poor at the start of the season but once the mechanical gremlins were sorted the combination became more and more successful. Dobson enjoyed several front row starts, a couple of pole positions and some fastest laps in the latter half of the year and scored two outright wins in the Graham Hill Championship series.

Having finished seventh overall in the Mini 1000 Challenge, Dobson is retaining Pearce support for the formula next year when, no doubt, the new car currently being built in the striking livery will prove even more competitive than this season's machine. As with the 1977 car Pearce Signs actually own the 1978 chassis and they are very keen to promote Chris, the car and themselves through their racing activities. They often buy 30 or 40 tickets for a Brands Hatch meeting where the car is appearing so that their clients and employees may share in the success of the team. In fact, Dobson readily admits he is fortunate enough to have the ideal sponsor and racing set-up. For the future Chris would like eventually to do a season of Group 1 racing in 1979 but will concentrate on his commitments in next year's Leyland Challenge first. It would be good to see the rapidly improving Dobson battling it out with the genial Paul Gaymer for supremacy once again at the start of the year.

MAWP



ANDY ACKERLEY

Originally from Northwich in Cheshire, 28-year-old Andy Ackerley is now living in Tunbridge Wells where he is a Technical Representative for Tremco who make sealants for the building trade. His earliest involvement in motorsport was as a spectator at nearby Oulton Park so racing was in his blood from an early age. It was during his spell at teacher training college that he had his first racing experience, doing five or six motorcycle events on a DMW Hornet a few years back.

Having qualified as an art teacher Andy gave up racing until the bug bit again in 1975. He invested in a course at the Winfield School at Goodwood where he reached the semi-finals of the annual Winfield Trophy in early 1976. His first public race was a novice event at Oulton Park on Good Friday 1976 where he was tenth quickest out of 50 drivers and qualified well up for the final. The Winfield hire-deal MRE suffered starter motor problems but, after a delayed getaway, Andy drove an excellent race to a top ten finish. After such an encouraging debut he was spurred on to buy his own car—the ex-Brian Lennox Hawke DL11 which was acquired from Jean Webb at Road & Track.

In May he entered a Brush Fusegear race but, with little experience and his girlfriend as mechanic, did not set the world on fire. Second time out at Castle Combe the car was badly damaged which eliminated him for almost the whole year. Even more determined to succeed, but now totally broke, Andy set about refurbishing the car over the winter with his sights firmly set on the 1977 Dunlop 'Star of Tomorrow' series. In an early round at Mallory Park he took pole position for his heat and went on to a superb win, although a chafed oil line put paid to his chances in the final and damaged his engine. An advert in *AUTOSPORT* for unpaid help brought Andy into contact with Richard Ward and Graeme Perry, who have been his Team Manager and mechanic ever since.

Assistance from Auriga engines immediately established the blue DL11 as the fastest of its type in the country. A couple of small sponsors helped with the running costs and, at the FF Festival at Brands Hatch, Ackerley finished seventh in his heat from the back of the grid and, but for a spin, would probably have qualified for the final. Rather than do the last few clubbies of the season Andy sold the car and has ordered a new Crosslé 32F for 1978 while sponsorship is being negotiated by his team, Invicta Racing, whose efforts will now be blessed with a 'works' engine following recent discussions.

MAWP



LIZ BURN

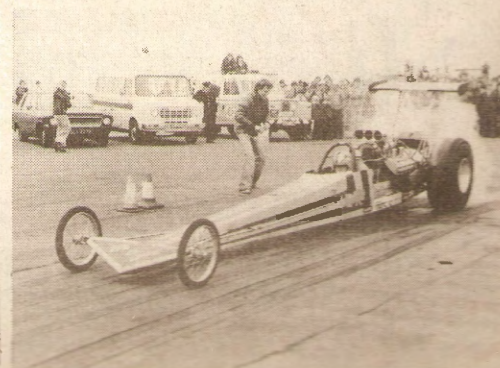
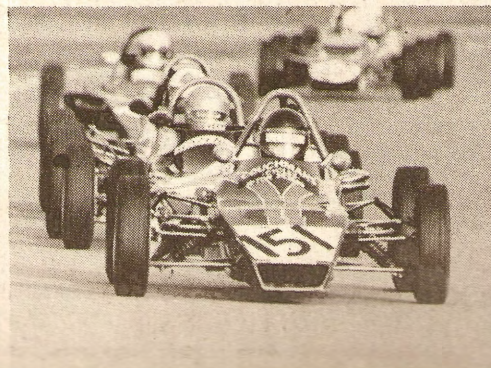
Egg farming may sound like an unlikely way to finance your racing but that is how the husband-and-wife team of Ollie and Liz Burn provide the funds to keep their drag racing team on the strips. Ollie started racing a few years back with 'Ollie's Folly', the old 'Oblivion' Avenger competition altered, before launching 27-year-old Liz into the sport two years ago in the 'Top Fuel' ranks in the original 'Lizard' chassis. 'The Lovely Liz', as she is known, settled in well but suffered a terrifying ride off the end of the strip later in the year which destroyed the rail.

This year Liz returned to the fray with a new rear-engined rail called 'The Lizard'. The car is powered by a 446 cu. in. (7.3-litre) supercharged Donovan-Chrysler V8 and is prepared by her husband. It is painted in the pink and blue livery of Allgood Modric Ltd who are the major sponsors of the car (besides 'the chickens!'). Liz has been extremely consistent this year, running in the methanol-burning Pro-Comp class. With two outright wins, speeds in the high-180mph bracket and low 7secs runs to her credit, Mrs Burn has succeeded in winning the Gauloises 'Pro-Comp' Championship for 1977, beating Mike Naylor to the title by five points. She has the added distinction of being the only lady driver outside the USA to win a major drag racing title.

The team is based at the Burns' farm at Knightcote, near Leamington Spa, Warwickshire where Liz fills the roles of Company Secretary, housewife—and mother to their two sons. Gauloises, the French tobacco firm are currently embarking upon their third year of promotion through drag racing and are very pleased with the results so far. Interest in their championship is growing all the time and competition this year has been keener than ever. It is a credit to Liz and Ollie that they have emerged victorious in 1977 and next year they will be doubling their efforts to retain the title.

For 1978 Liz will pilot 'The Lizard' again but she will have to contend with Ollie's entry into 'Pro-Comp' with a new Funny Car chassis. It seems likely that the coming season will see runs in the 6secs bracket and terminal velocities of over 200mph in the category—a few years back the nitro-burning fuellers were striving to conquer the same barriers—and hopefully the 'Liz & Ollie Drag Racing Team' will be complete. One thing is certain and that is that the reigning Gauloises champion, Liz Burn, must start as favourite.

MAWP



Julian is King

For the first time in five years, sporting trials have a new champion. PAUL SHELDON spoke to Julian Fack.

It is five years since the world of sporting trials acclaimed a new RAC Trials Champion and, in Julian Fack, they have a worthy successor to the great Jack Pearce. Fack has been threatening Pearce's crown for some time and this year was to prove the culmination of all his efforts and a fitting reward for some fine driving.

For one so obviously inventive, Julian has a surprisingly non-technical background. His father, indeed, is more intellectual than scientific. Julian has three brothers—James and the twins John and Jeremy—but Julian is the eldest of the family at 32. He was educated at Harrow and Sheffield University and is now a Company Director at a Midlands brickworks.

His first trial was the Roy Feddon in 1972 and he gained his first win in the South West 18 months later in the Jacobean Trial. For his first season he bought a Cannon from Ivor Portlock and modified it greatly for the following season by fitting a Hillman Imp engine and new front suspension. This car is the Impunity now driven by the twins and is cited by Julian as a prize example of one of the chief appeals of sporting trials—namely that a car, when sorted into a competitive machine, it will remain so (and a potential winner) for a long time.

Fack is particularly concerned about the sort of publicity that trialling receives. People seem to think that to be a competitive force in trialling one has to spend several thousand pounds. But he points out this is by no means the case. Trialling, he says, is far and away the cheapest form of four-wheeled motor sport. If a person is technically minded he can build a car which would be as good as any in the land for about £1000. Even if one buys a kit of ready made parts and a brand new engine a car can cost as little as £1750. And that in an age where a competitive 250cc kart can cost £1600 is quite remarkable. And, of course, once the car is complete the maintenance costs are very low, the car will remain competitive for many years and entrance fees for competitions are derisory.

Julian thinks the entry fees are too low—averaging about £3.50 per trial—and feels that the day is not far off when marshals will have to be paid petrol expenses. If this were done the standard of marshalling would improve and become consistent—something it is not at present, and cannot be when sections are marshalled by willing souls who are not experienced in the rules of trialling. Mention of rules brings him onto another subject and a cause of conflict. He would very much like to see the rules stabilised. He says: "At present they tend to change from year to year with the results that drivers find it difficult to follow the rule changes."

Like all triallers, Julian has his likes and dislikes. As one of the group who favour the art of trickling with a light foot through sections as opposed to the blasting technique of, say Jack



Julian Fack and (almost visible) Meg Marrion in action.

Pearce—Fack's dislike of the chalky slopes of Kent is well known. His favourite type of sections are either grass or heather, where his incredibly delicate use of the throttle is at its most advantageous. It is a joy and an education to see Impunity chugging slowly uphill with the engine barely turning over—the ultimate in trialling finesse. So, not surprisingly, his favourite course is the site of the Derbyshire Trial at Longnor.

Surprisingly, for a sport so friendly and free of financial hassle, the pressure from week to week is quite great both for Fack and his near rivals. One characteristic that he rates highly in his twin brothers is their ability to relax in the face of competition. It is so easy to get into a rut where nothing goes right and this happens to all drivers from time to time. Jack Pearce, in particular, is going through a bad patch at present but, as Fack says, it would be very silly to write him off. Along with Gordon Jackson, he is one of the best drivers around and will certainly come again. When Pearce is on form, Fack says, he can win on any course in the country—and probably will.

The constant impression that Julian Fack gives is one of the deepest love for his sport and the greatest respect and admiration for his rivals with not the slightest suggestion of snide comments and back-biting. Sporting Trials are

known as one of the friendliest of sports—probably because of the lack of monetary reward—and Fack, by the good-tempered approach to his opponents and his encouragement and advice to newcomers to the sport, is determined to maintain this friendly image.

Like his predecessor—Jack Pearce—Julian Fack is a very worthy champion and ambassador for sporting trials. The sight of him striding quickly up a section, the eyes darting from side to side noting all the hazards and the thin figure leaning forward in his seat as the pale blue car negotiates the turns will be with us for a long time to come.



Above: Julian's younger twin brothers. Below: Fack with his passenger Meg Marrion.



Who wins in BA?

NIGEL ROEBUCK previews the opening round of the 1978 World Championship.

Time passes quickly. The off-season is over now, and the 1978 World Championship Grand Prix season gets underway on Sunday, with the Argentine Grand Prix in Buenos Aires.

Predictions, at the best of times, are something a wise man avoids, but the early season races especially are a law unto themselves. The cars themselves are familiar, for very few new machines are run in Argentina and Brazil. Traditionally they begin to appear at Kyalami during the protracted testing which always precedes the South African Grand Prix at the beginning of March.

If there is a dearth of all-new cars, however, there is plenty that is different about South America. Over the winter drivers have switched camps, and this weekend provides the first opportunity of seeing new partnerships in action.

Somewhat illogically, we start with Brabham. Bernie's cars are numbered 1 and 2 this season, which is a curious state of affairs when one considers that a Brabham-Alfa Romeo has yet to win a race. But Niki Lauda now drives the Parmalat-backed cars, and *numero uno* is apparently the right of the championship winning driver rather than car. And that seems illogical to us.

However, putting such things aside, how is Niki's move going to affect Grand Prix racing, and will Brabham now bridge the gap between competitiveness and success? Lauda's testing with the BT45 has gone well, the Austrian getting down to a Ricard time comparable with James Hunt's, and no one else has been able to do that. Three BT45Cs have been taken to South America, for Lauda and John Watson, and it is worth bearing in mind that John started from the front row in BA last year, and led until his tyres overheated. It seems reasonable to expect both these men to be right up at the front on Sunday. Reliability, according to Niki, is no problem. If something breaks, you change is for something different, eliminate the weaknesses one by one. Lauda *made* that happen at Ferrari. It may take a little time with a new team, but Niki's record speaks for itself.

Three and four in the entry list are the new Tyrrell 008 cars for Patrick Depailler and new team member Didier Pironi. Ken Tyrrell and his men have strenuously denied rumours of chassis-flexing during the Ricard tests, and certainly Depailler was far from despondent about his prospects last month. Could this be in anticipation of the Renault turbo engine which could find its way into a Tyrrell before much longer? Pironi makes his F1 debut this weekend, but his showing at Ricard was more than promising.

Perhaps the biggest question mark hangs over John Player Team Lotus, who have not taken their new 79 on this trip, preferring to concentrate on a pair of 78s for Mario Andretti and Ronnie Peterson. What effect will the Swede's presence have on the team? Is he still capable of the sort of form we saw in his early Lotus days the first time around? And will sideways beat smooth? The Lotus 78 has so far given of its best when driven on rails, but Ronnie's Ricard times suggest that maybe an opposite approach can work, as well. We await the Lotus practice times with baited breath. Either man could win the race.

Andretti feels that James Hunt will be the guy to beat in Argentina, and only a brave man would disagree. The McLaren M26 really came on strong during the final races of last year, and James has been consistently the quickest man during the Ricard tests. Ladbroke's have made

Hunt a comfortable favourite for Buenos Aires (as well as for the World Championship), and you cannot fault their logic. Patrick Tambay makes his first appearance for McLaren on Sunday, and could well finish in the points.

After the recent boating accident, in which he and his family were reported missing, the home crowd will be relieved and delighted to see Carlos Reutemann on the grid, and support for him should be even stronger than ever. Ferrari have not taken the 312T3 over, and Lole and Gilles Villeneuve will both drive T2s—shod, of course, with Michelin tyres. And here lies the other great imponderable. Tests have shown the car to be very much quicker on the French tyres than on their previous Goodyears, but they have yet to race on them, of course. Reutemann apparently damaged an ankle in the boating *debacle*, but can be relied upon to give his all for Argentina.

Numbers 9 and 10 are the ATS cars of Jochen Mass and Jean-Pierre Jarier. Designed by Robin Herd, they will be sponsored by Sony. For the moment, Jarier's deal with the team is for the two South American races only, so there is a particular onus on the Frenchman to remind us of just how quick he can be. Three years ago he was on the pole in BA.

Jumper was in a Shadow back in those glory days of 1975, but Don Nichols's outfit has undergone many changes of personnel since then, and the DN8s will have two new drivers this season. Neither Hans Stuck nor Clay Regazzoni have yet driven their Shadows, but the cars should be reasonably competitive.

Regazzoni, of course, was thought to be staying with Ensign for this season, but a last-minute decision to switch to Shadow left Morris Nunn in something of a quandary. For South America, at least, the problem is solved. Danny Ongais and Lamberto Leoni will handle the cars, but Mo needs a long-term solution. Ongais is unable to do a full F1 season because of clashing USAC races, and Leoni is not yet sure how many races he will do.

Rupert Keegan missed Argentina last year, for the Hesketh operation did not get underway until the Spanish GP. On Sunday, however, he will be there, having his first outing for John Surtees. Rupert has been very impressive during tests at Goodwood. Leading the team, as last year, will be Vittorio Brambilla, now 40

years old and as keen as ever.

The ten remaining entries are all from single-car outfits. Without a doubt, the most significant of these is Jody Scheckter with the Wolf. The team has taken out the WR4, which features revised bodywork and, according to Peter Warr, 'between 120 and 150 detail changes'. Exactly a year ago, the car made its debut, in Argentina, and Jody pulled off the surprise win of the year. Always superbly fit, the South African will certainly have the stamina for what may be a very hot race indeed.

The Ligier-Matra, with revised rear suspension and lighter Hewland FGA gearbox (the car has previously used a TL200), will be driven, as ever, by Jacques Laffite, another man well pleased with Ricard testing.

Emerson Fittipaldi will be there with his revised Copersucar-Fittipaldi F5A, and one can only hope that personnel changes over the winter will eventually bring the Brazilian back to competitiveness. Tests indicated that some worthwhile progress had been made.

Frank Williams's revitalised team will have Alan Jones in the new Saudia-Williams FW06, a car which showed a great deal of promise at Paul Ricard.

Ron Tauranac's new Theodore TR1 is to be driven in Argentina and Brazil by Eddie Cheever. So long as nothing untoward occurs in practice, the American should qualify without too much trouble. At 19 years and four months, he will therefore become the youngest Grand Prix driver of all time. Also hopeful of qualifying for her first Grand Prix is Divina Galica, driving the Hesketh 308E for the first time.

The last four entries come from Brett Lunger and Emilio Villota, with their McLaren M23s, from Hector Rebaque, who drives his newly-acquired Lotus 78 for the first time, and from Arturo Merzario who will race the new car which bears his own name.

Quite often in the past, Buenos Aires has flung out a surprise result, and we may well see more of the same on Sunday. Hunt looks like the best bet, but Andretti, Peterson, Scheckter and Reutemann should be able to make him work for it. Sunday will answer a lot of questions.

Facing page, top left: Phillippe, Tyrrell and Kempf cluster around Patrick Depailler's Tyrrell 008. Centre left: The old firm in new surroundings. Ermamo Cuoghi and Niki Lauda are Brabham people now. Right: Ronnie Peterson, back home again, was very quick at Paul Ricard with the Lotus 78. Bottom: Alan Jones's first impressions of the Saudia-Williams were all good. Centre spread: Niki Lauda's test programme with the Parmalat Brabham BT45C has gone well. The World Champion races the car for the first time in Argentina on Sunday.

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP 1 ARGENTINE GRAND PRIX

Autodromo Municipal de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires
Circuit No 15, 3.708 miles (5.968 kms)
Lap record: James Hunt (F1 Hesketh-Ford 308), 1m 50.91s, 120.378mph.
Organisers: Automovil Club Argentino, Buenos Aires.

TIMETABLE

Practice

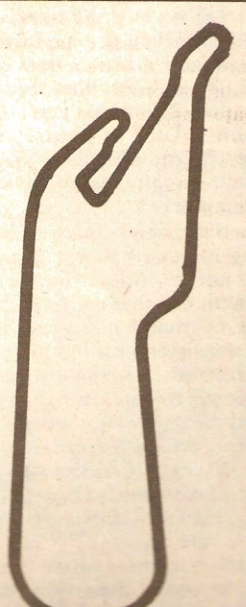
Friday/Saturday At the time of going to press, times had not been advised.

Race (53 laps, 196.524 miles)
Sunday 15.00

Note: Argentina time is three hours behind British time (ie the organisers have scheduled the start for 18.00 our time on Sunday).

BROADCASTING

Saturday	17.30 (approx) Radio 2
Sunday	22.00 Radio 4
Monday	07.25 Radio 4
	08.25 Radio 4



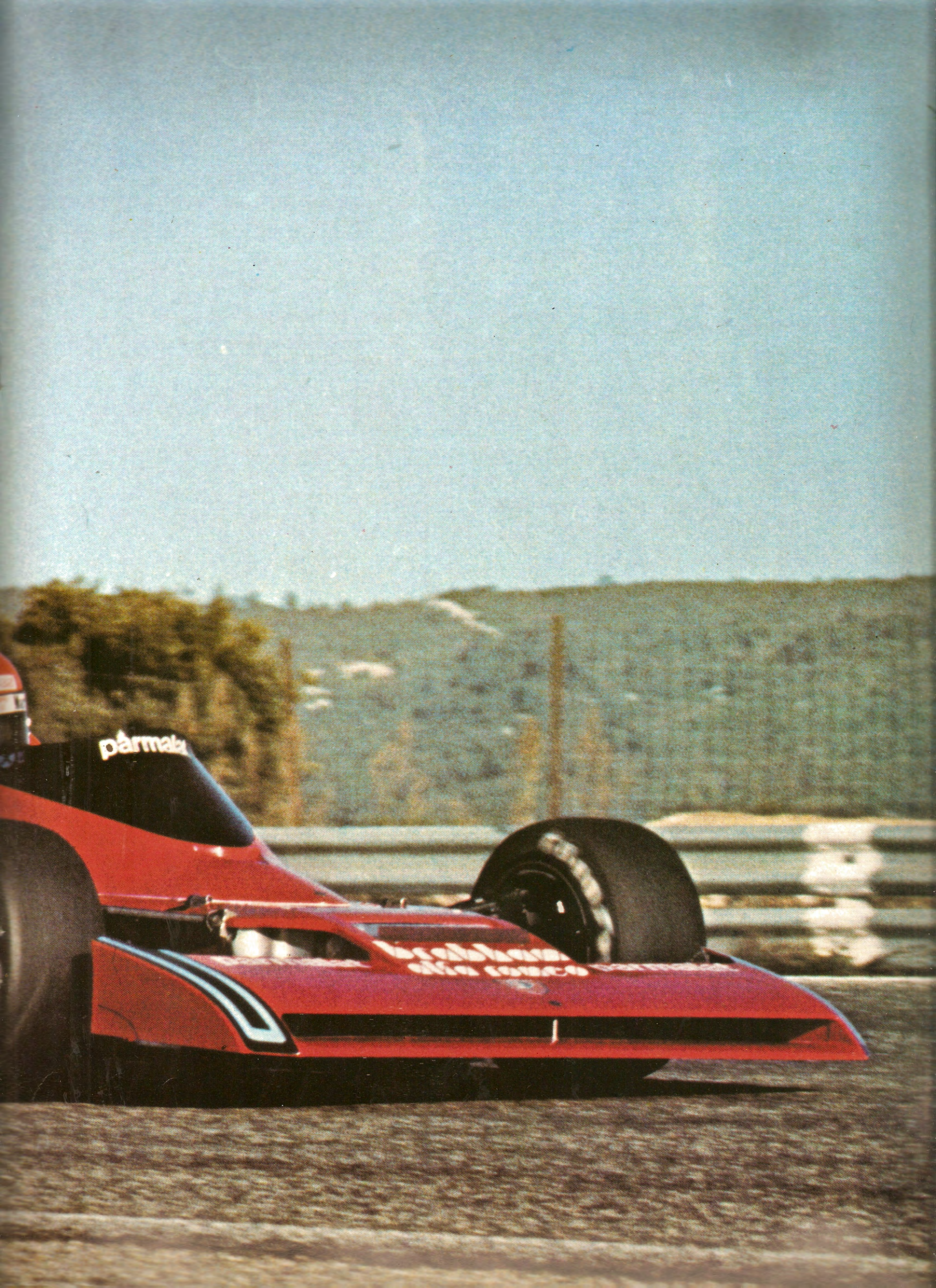


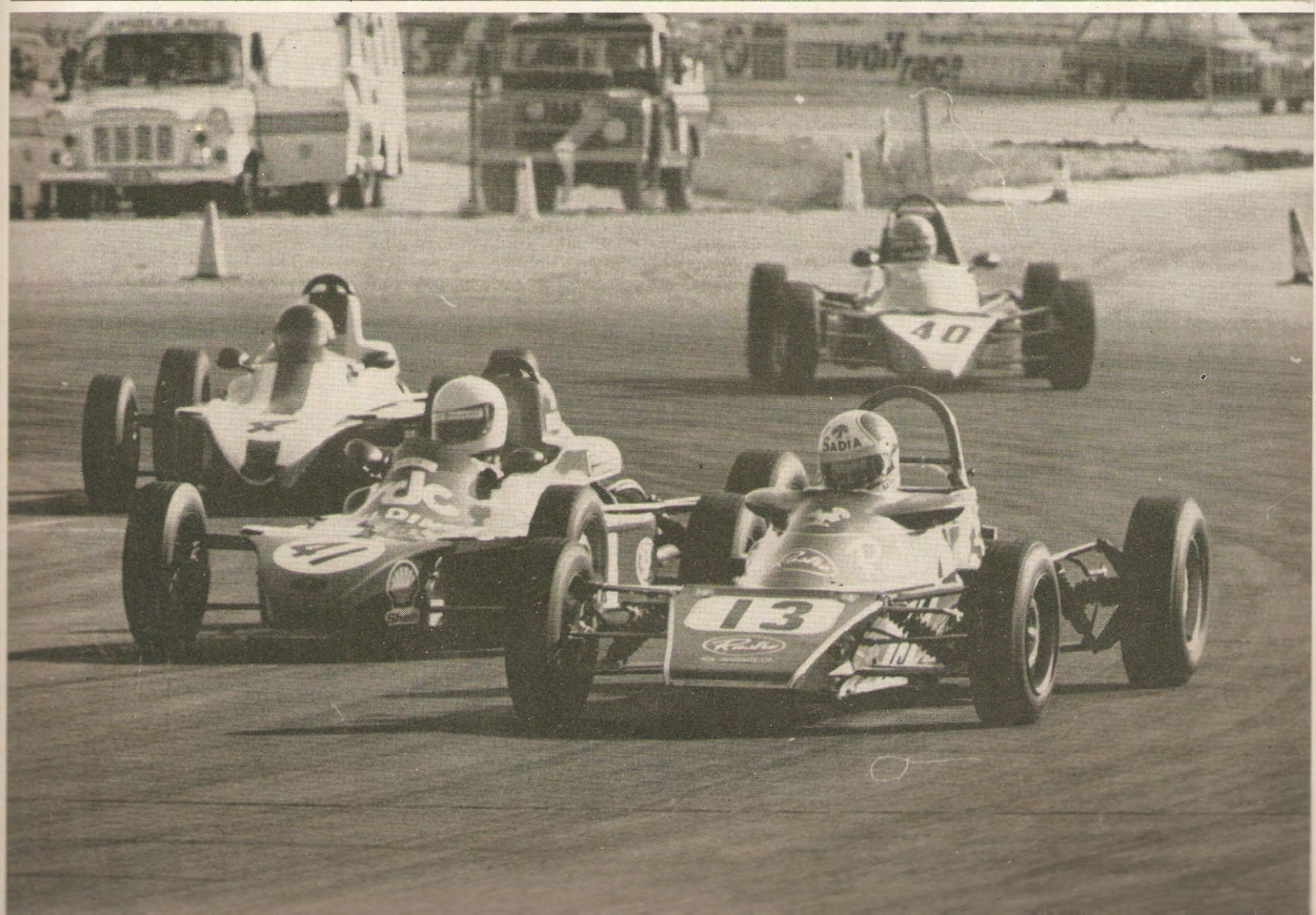


GOODYEAR

Marlboro

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May the Fords be with you

In a new AUTOSPORT Seasonal Survey, JEREMY SHAW (FF1600), MARCUS PYE (FF2000) and ROBIN BRADFORD (Sports 2000) follow the progress of these popular categories in 1977.

In 1977, Formula Ford 1600 celebrated its tenth birthday with yet another exciting and close-fought season, emphasising the formula's importance as a training ground for future Grand Prix stars.

But the tenth year of this Ford-powered category was significant in other ways. 1977 was also the third, and so far most successful season, of Formula Ford 2000, established in 1975 as a stepping stone from FF1600 to F3.

More important still, it marked the inaugural year of Sports 2000, a new category aimed at filling the gap left by the failure of the disastrous British 2-litre Sports Car Championship in 1976. Based simply on the running gear of the open-wheeler 2000, and clothed with a sports car body, the new category proved a qualified success in its first year with the promise of full grids and even closer racing for this year.

FORMULA FORD 1600

While Formula Ford 2000 struggles gamely to gain universal acceptance as an important graduation Formula, its older relation, Formula Ford 1600, continues to thrive, producing new talent and remains this country's premier proving-ground. The Formula is now in its eleventh season with the rules hardly changed since its inception—surely a sound measure of its practicability and popularity. Every passing year unearths budding 'superstars', whose qualities are put further to the test as they progress up the ranks towards their ultimate goal of Formula One.

This season five drivers have stood out above the rest in terms of results and, of these, at least three should be capable of reaching greater heights. The joy of FF1600, though, is that while this élite battle manfully against each other, there are always a host of others desperately trying to break their stranglehold and an even greater proportion who are either content to run in the mid-field groups, or who cannot afford the up-to-date machinery that is now necessary to stand out from the rest.

The essence of FF1600 is its competitiveness. The constructors strive hard to gain that extra fraction of a second that will see their drivers in the lead but it's largely a case of swings and roundabouts whereby a new car may prove to be marginally quicker in a straight line but, almost invariably, it will consequently tend to be slightly slower around the corners, or vice-versa, so that its adversaries will soon catch up again. At the top of the tree, the car/engine combinations are almost identical in terms of ultimate performance so that when one driver consistently wins or scores good results then it is almost invariably certain that it is he who possesses the special qualities.

This is the case for each of our 'Top Five' who are, alphabetically, David Leslie, Donald MacLeod, Nigel Mansell, Francisco Serra and Trevor van Rooyen—two Scotsmen, an Englishman, a Brazilian and a South African.

Winner of one of the two Grovewood Special Commendations, 24-year-old ex-kartist David Leslie was in his second season of FF1600, having competed and finished second in the 1976 Dunlop 'Star of Tomorrow' series with an old Crosslé 16F. David, born in Dumfries, now lives near Carlisle and has travelled nearly 30,000 miles this year in his yellow Caravanette and he finds that living out in the wilds makes it even more difficult to make ends meet. A favourable deal was worked out with Alan Cornock at Royale and Scholar Engines to start the year with a new Royale-Scholar RP24.

Much later in the season he obtained some backing from Crossflags Motors of Dumfries and, in all, scored 30 wins in the car. He also won the BARC Championship but, despite very few accidents—"I simply couldn't afford to have any"—he still didn't cover his costs. David has a very sensible approach to his racing and seems able to keep out of trouble. He wanted, like everyone else, to move up to F3 for 1978 but funds wouldn't allow this so he has plumped for FF2000 in which he should be a regular front-runner with the new Van Diemen.

Fellow Scot Donald MacLeod is no stranger to Formula Ford having been a front runner whenever he has raced since 1972. Following some quick drives at the tail end of the 1976 season, 29-year-old Donald was invited to join Ralph Firman's 'works' Van Diemen International Racing Services team to use the new Dave Baldwin-designed RF77 model. He was, as ever, using a Scholar engine and he began the season by totally dominating the opening three Townsend Thoresen races. MacLeod concentrated on this series but his team-mate, Chico Serra, gained quickly in experience and began beating Donald by mid-season and went on to take the title from the Scotsman. MacLeod has probably now given up any real hopes of 'making the grade' but the likeable former Grovewood Award winner never gives up without a fight and always gives of his best. An example of this was seen as recently as the FF Festival when he picked up ten places in the final to finish fifth setting equal fastest lap into the bargain. His skills can always be used as a yardstick when assessing newcomers!

Nigel Mansell was certainly the English 'find of the season' and many people believe that he is capable of becoming one of the very best. Aged 24, from Birmingham, Nigel had a few races in 1976 with a Hawke DL11, after several successful years of karting. This year he became an instant pace-maker at the wheel of a John Lipman-designed Javelin JLS. His debut with the car was on the Silverstone GP circuit where he qualified, sensationally, over half-a-second faster than the rest—unheard of in FF1600—before the car failed him. Unfortunately, the car, although fast, continued to be fragile and was eventually replaced by a Crosslé 25F. Within a short time he had impressed John Crosslé enough for a new 32F to be put at his disposal but a bad crash on its maiden outing at

Brands landed him in hospital with a broken neck. With dashing, some would say foolhardy, bravado Nigel was soon back in the cockpit wearing a neck-brace and a series of excellent results led to him pipping Trevor van Rooyen for the Brush Fusegear title as well as winning the other Grovewood Commendation. Mansell's approach is good. He never lets things upset him—even the seriousness of the Brands crash seemed to escape him—and he's always able to assess the situation clearly in the heat of battle, a tough yet calculating style that should pay dividends this coming season.

Twenty-year-old Francisco "Chico" Serra is the 'babe' of the quintet who came to this country at the beginning of the year as Brazilian FV and former Kart champion and with a burning ambition to progress. He joined the Van Diemen equipe and immediately made quite an impact. In his first race, at Brands, he was involved in an accident with Mike Blanchet that saw the Jerseyman roll spectacularly out of the race! Chico was unruffled and continued to learn the English circuits with remarkable rapidity until he won his first race most impressively on a wet May day at Oulton Park. He concentrated solely on the Townsend Thoresen championship and this he won with ease. Having over-hauled MacLeod's early season lead, Chico reeled off a remarkable series of results and in the last fifteen rounds he *never* finished lower than third! In all, he scored in every championship race—a unique feat I'm sure—and he rounded off the year by dominating the FF Festival. Next year he will be seen in Ron Dennis's new F3 team and it would seem to be a good bet that he may beat his fellow-countryman Emerson Fittipaldi as the youngest ever World Champion. He looks that good—but he'll have to improve his command of the English language!

Finally, but certainly not least, comes South African Trevor van Rooyen. This 28-year-old former motor-cycle racer began the year with small backing from the Scorpion Racing drivers School to run a Royale RP24 with Minister power. Trevor's single-minded attitude to winning together with his meticulous preparation earned him a reputation as a hard man but it also strained his financial resources. He eventually found an enthusiastic backer in SDC Ltd of Bedford and was then able to breathe a little more easily. Trevor won more races than anyone else in 1977—33, which equalled Richard Morgan's record in 1974—and won the under-supported (due to dreadful organisational blunders) RAC Championship but missed winning the one he really wanted, the Brush Fusegear, by one point to Mansell in an exciting climax at Silverstone. It was, in some ways, a frustrating year. He knew that, at his age, he *must* win in order to progress into F3. Maybe he put too much pressure on himself in the end but, whatever, Trevor was always a very hard man to beat and it will be interesting to see how he shapes up back home in a series of Formula Atlantic. We'll be surprised if he isn't winning races before long.

There were a lot of other good drivers around last season. London-based Irishman David McClelland was always a front-runner with his Crosslé 30F but he didn't have the time or the money to concentrate solely on motor-racing. David concentrated on the BARC series and pushed Leslie very hard indeed wherever they went but eventually had to bow down and it was the Scotsman who took the spoils. But if it hadn't been for an awful run of bad luck in mid-season then things could have been closer. Another competitor from the Emerald Isle was Bernard Devaney, who would have achieved far more had he not been contracted to run the new Hawke DL17. From being so competitive in 1976, the Southend firm just could not get to grips with the new car until well after half-season. Bernard became disillusioned with the outfit and it began to show in his driving, which became very ragged on occasions. Things im

May the Fords be with you

continued

proved towards the end of the year with the DL19 and Devaney started to show what we know he is capable of, . . . but it had been a long wait. The young trio of Irishmen—Kenny Acheson, Trevor Templeton and Michael Roe—also showed themselves to be very capable drivers and these will probably be the men to beat next season.

In Royale RP24s Yves Sarazin, from Lille in Northern France, Paul Smith from Birmingham and John Village from Sheffield all showed their competence and were regularly in the leading bunch while Buckingham driver Peter Morgan struggled most impressively on a very limited budget with an RP21.

David Heale always went well on the Southern tracks with his Reynard 75F and would have achieved more had he been able to devote more time to motor racing. Mike Blanchet did not race as often as he had the year before due to his commitments as Sales Manager at Lola Cars but he carried out all the development work on the new Lola T540 and looks to have achieved some measure of success.

Young Jim Weaver competed rarely with a Hawke DL17 or DL19 and showed fire as well as promise, while Barry Pigot and Nigel Gough competed regularly and competitively with Van Diemen RF77s.



Above: BARC Champion David Leslie.

Below: Brush Fusegear Champion—Nigel Mansell.



The Norfolk-produced car was also used by Tony Halliwell to win the Brands Hatch *Kent Messenger* championship, having started the year with a Hawke DL15, but he rarely competed in the national championship events. There were the usual regional series of which the Northern ones, run by the BARC and BRSCC ("Tate Trophy") were both won by that enthusiastic Scotsman Cameron Binnie in a Royale RP21, while Mick Starkey took the NSCC's 'North of England' series in his aged ATS-Merlyn. Paul Sleeman used a Crosslé 25F to win both the TEAC and the Lydden Hill spoils, while David Wheeler took a Royale RP21 to the South-Western Championship, Stu Lawson a Hawke to the Scottish, and Alan Stringer (Crosslé) won the specialised Longridge series.

There was also the important BRSCC run Dunlop 'Star of Tomorrow' honours, which were convincingly won by the Scorpion Royale RP24 of American Willy T. Ribbs. Willy didn't even need to compete in the final three rounds while Bill Shepherd also showed promise at the wheel of his Crosslé.

FORMULA FORD 2000

Formula Ford 2000 celebrated its third year by gaining widespread acceptance on the national calendar for the first time, and this new found strength was reflected in the Benelux countries which staged their own championships. After a slow start in 1975 when around a dozen cars would come under starter's orders, FF2000 has gone from strength to strength. The following year saw 30 to 40 drivers competing on a regular basis and, in 1977, upwards of 50 cars were



Above: RAC Champ Trevor van Rooyen.

Below: Willy T—tomorrow's star.



contesting the two major series and several more were rarely seen outside Scotland.

As originators of FF2000, MCD's championship in 1977 received enthusiastic backing from the Lord's Taverners charity, this proving beneficial to all parties following the temporary withdrawal of their original sponsors, the Allied Polymer Group. Last year, for the first time, a second championship was run by the BARC who decided that the number of possible competitors warranted another series, leaving drivers and sponsors with a very full season ahead of them. The BARC championship was also a great success although it was, perhaps, not quite so well supported—the bill for this venture being picked up by Mike Keegan's British Air Ferries concern who had previously been associated with the club's FF1600 series.

It will be remembered that FF2000 was designed 'to cream off the top FF1600 men' thus providing a stepping stone to F3 and ensuring an annual turnover of top line drivers in the junior formula. This has failed on two counts: first, as always, those with the fattest cheque books have made it where other more talented drivers are stuck in FF1600 for their sixth or seventh season simply through lack of finance; second, and possibly far more important, it has been proven that no intermediary step is needed for someone who is going to be a future F1 or F2 star. Neither Derek Daly nor Derek Warwick, for instance, two of 1976's best FF1600 men, have needed a grounding in FF2000 before taking the step into F3—both drivers, nonetheless, possessed sufficient backing for a serious assault but both also had an abundance of talent.

This, of course, is not intended as a criticism of the formula which serves its purpose as an excellent top club category but as one of the British motor racing system in general in conjunction with the prevailing economic climate. The budgets for FF1600, FF2000 and F3, for instance, are around £10,000, £16,000 and £35,000 per annum respectively, even at a conservative estimate, although many of the leading drivers are spending far more to remain competitive so one can see the quandary facing the prospective 'ace' driver of 1978.

On the driver front, though, the formula was more competitive than ever save for the performance of one man, South African Rad Dougall. Having suffered a horrifying crash in 1976, the plucky Dougall bounced back, with ample sponsorship from The Toleman Group—his long-time sponsors—and, largely through early season domination, pulled out unassailable leads in both national championships. Thus he ended his year as a worthy double champion and gained a passport into F2 from his overjoyed backers. It will be interesting to see whether his lack of F3 experience will tell but nevertheless this has been a magnificent achievement.

Dougall piloted Royale's 'development' RP25 until a modified chassis was produced mid-season. His main rivals were many. Jeremy Rossiter shone on occasions in the Spax Dampers-financed Reynard although teammate Adrian Reynard himself had a torrid time between flashes of inspiration. Frank Sytner went particularly well early on in the unfashionable Dulon chassis which were raced principally by the Ken Hensley team, although his considerable skill behind the wheel contributed in no small way to this. Sadly, with the acquisition of a Royale like Dougall's his enthusiasm was tempered slightly which was a mystery to everyone after a few good placings with the car at first.

Perhaps the sternest challenge, especially in the latter stages of the season, came from the young Essex driver Phillip Bullman. Having graduated from FF1600 over the winter, Bullman took his works-assisted Shipcare-supported Hawke DL16 to a debut win at Brands Hatch before a spate of bad luck effectively sidelined him for a while. Eventually his tre-

May the Fords be with you

continued

mendous potential was allowed to show through with a hard charge in the final few events of the year, Phil winning several in succession. Although some doubts were cast as to the legality of his Rowland engine these were quickly dispelled when the RAC stripped the unit soon after his run of wins. In fact the formula has happily been free from the wrangles over technicalities which have befallen FF1600 in the past and F3 in 1977, indeed a promising sign for '78.

Kenny Gray, another South African, drove the only other Royale to be seen regularly and took a couple of wins. His car was run by Mike Eastick's Scorpion Race Hire business, Gray always proving quick and reliable in the car.

Apart from Bullman, several other drivers appeared in Hawkes during the season of which Geoff Friswell's R. E. Bates-backed example or the Brook Hire machine of Stu Baird were usually the quickest. After such good seasons as 1975 and '76 it was surprising to see so few Crosslés on the British circuits. This was not the case on the continent, however, where Dutchman Jim Vermeulen imported a number of chassis for his national championship achieving almost 100 per cent market saturation for the Irish *marque*. On the home front, though, Crosslé's hopes rested with the genial Venezuelan, Oscar Notz, who gained a couple of wins with the older 31F and severely underfinanced chassis, fellow South American Daniel Puerta and latterly Richard Dutton who started the year with a 31F before a new 33F appeared at the end of the season. Worcester driver Chris Skellern, another graduate from FF1600, had some good runs in his 1977 chassis and should go well again in 1978 as should Desiré Wilson whose efforts impressed on her sporadic British appearances.

Apart from Rossiter and Reynard in the Spax-cars, Adrian's neat designs were successful in the hands of Steve Farthing who won a BAF round at Croft and the Robin Hood team of sailmaker Nick Foy and the quick Aussie Mike Quinn. The latter equipe chose Reynards from the beginning of the season and these cars were superbly turned out throughout, Quinn in particular impressing both as a gifted test pilot and as a forceful driver. The rapid Ian Briggs made a brief and underfinanced foray into the

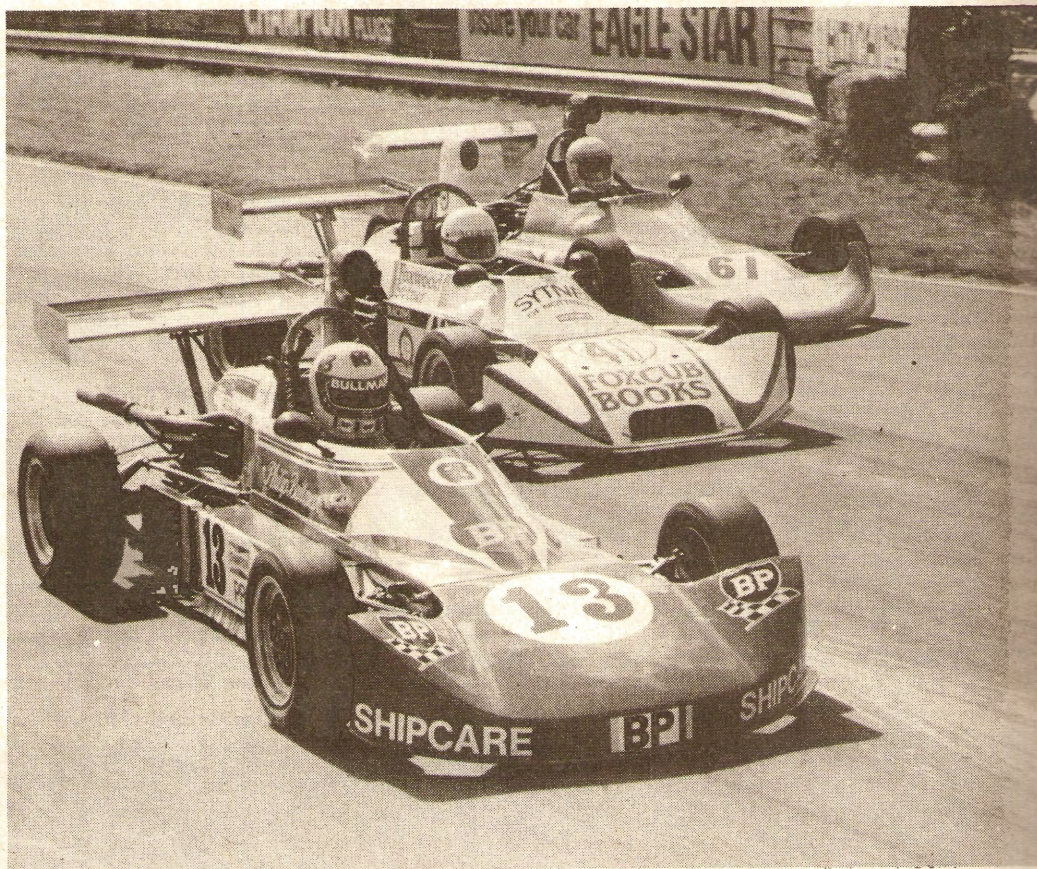
formula with his usual panache but his shoe-string budget never allowed his full potential to show. Tim Wallwork ran another 77SF model under the Richard Dutton banner again and was a consistent runner throughout although, ironically, the most spectacular Reynard of all only had a few outings in the hands of the talented Rob Wilson. The New Zealander started the year with one of the two Tiga chassis to run regularly and when this proved unsuccessful his sponsors, ICL Computers and Royal Grafton China, saw fit to purchase a new Reynard. Rob scored a superb win in the car first time out at Mallory and was always in the top half-dozen thereafter. He, like Bullman, will be having a crack at F3 next season and should be a strong contender.

One of the most exciting developments of FF2000 in 1977 was the rise to prominence of the Delta *marque*. Designed by Patrick Head, also responsible for the new Saudia-Williams F1 car, Nick Crossley's beautifully engineered machines were driven by Beaconsfield driver Richard Wills, Bruce Coate-Bond, Crossley himself and, in the last few events by Mike Quinn, the fast but erratic Australian having left the Robin Hood camp late in the year.

Quinn's fortunes, along with the team's own, gradually improved until the by now very competitive chassis scored a one-two in the final race of the season at Thruxton.

Eldens were used by a number of drivers in '77, notably Frank Bradley, Howard Drake and Guy Garson although it was FF1600 graduate Rick Gorne who was invariably the fastest in this chassis. His S&G Stores sponsored Mk18 was driven with great verve, the immaculate machine often running inside the top six, Gorne surprising many with his speed and impressing all with his professional approach both on and off the track.

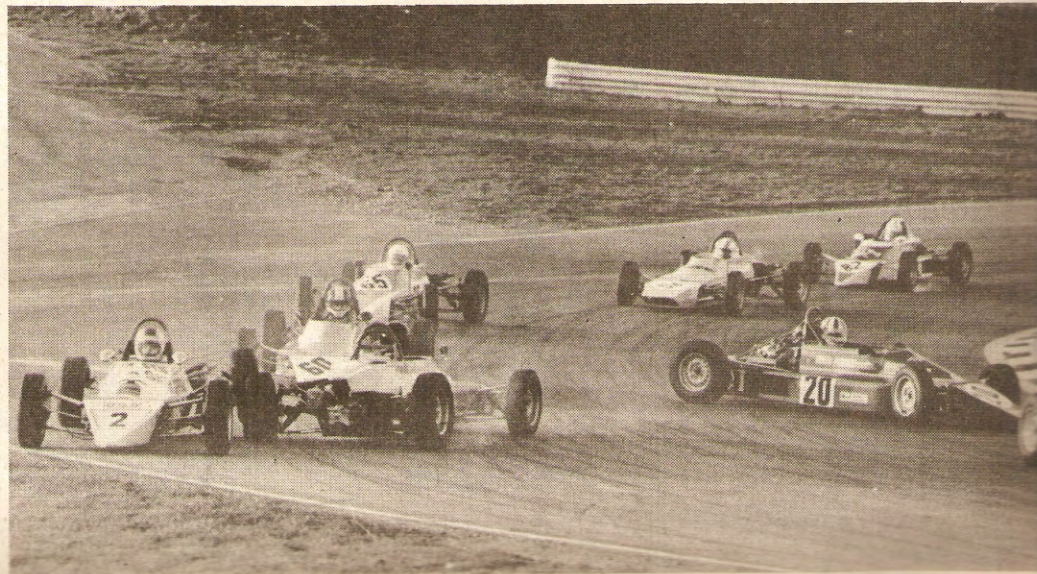
Several one-off chassis appeared during the season including the smart Mobil-supported Nomad built by Phil Lloyd which was a tribute to its owner/designer/builder/driver despite handling gremlins; the beautiful Osella FAF campaigned by John Poxon for the Italian firm and handled on its British debut by the enthusiastic Mike Wilds; Syd Fox who soldiered on with the old Palliser now in Condor guise; the nicely made CTG of Neil Betteridge not to mention the odd showing of a car from Ray, Sark and latterly the advanced looking Saracen.



From neat FF2000 driving at Mallory (above) to rather less ordered FF1600 formation at Brands (below).



Double FF2000 victor Rad Dougall.



May the Fords be with you

continued

SPORTS 2000

The creation of a new formula at the start of the 1977 season—Sports 2000—attracted rather predictable reactions: in the AUTOSPORT club racing survey last year, it was referred to as ‘a half-baked idea’ while there was a general feeling that the addition of yet another new category to the already vast list would serve only to confuse even more spectators even more frequently.

Certainly, from conception to birth, Sports 2000 was very quick in the making, but to suggest the idea was ‘half-baked’ is really something of an exaggeration; the idea was merely simple. Take the basic running gear of the already successful Formula Ford 2000, clothe it in sportscar bodywork and fill the void left by the total failure of the 1976 British 2-litre Sports Car Championship. SodaStream agreed to sponsor the BRSCC/MCD series for its first two years.

The pattern of development of the category, too, has followed that of FF2000 quite closely, at least for the first year. Just as the grids were small for the single-seater class in 1975, its inaugural year, so have they been for the sports cars this year. The most marked similarity, though, has been the close and often very exciting racing.

There have never been more than 13 cars on a Sports 2000 grid—except when the BRDC, somewhat misguidedly, ran the sports cars alongside Clubmans ‘B’ Class cars at Silverstone resulting in some rather unpleasant squabbles over driving tactics—but the competition has been close. While the standard of driving occasionally left a lot to be desired, the standard of drivers was generally high: former modsports champion John Cooper—thwarted in his attempts to buy a customer Porsche 935 for long-distance sports car racing—won the first SodaStream Sports 2000 series after a hard battle with Divina Galica.

Both in Lola T490s, Cooper’s sponsored by Squires Steel and Galica’s by Kelly Girl, these were the two who were normally fighting it out for top spot. Of the 20 rounds, Divina won ten,



Sports 2000 champion John Cooper.

setting fastest lap in eleven, but Cooper’s championship win resulted from his consistency—a score in each round—with five wins, six seconds and only one place below fourth.

The predominant chassis throughout the year was the Lola T490, simply a cut-down version of Lola’s very successful T294. This was hardly surprising as Derek Ongaro, then with Lola, was instrumental in drawing up the regulations for the championship and Lola naturally produced the first complete car. Lolas won 19 of the twenty rounds, in the hands of Galica, Cooper, John Brown, Chris Alford, Rad Dougall and Derek Daly, ‘the other John Webb’ claiming the distinction of the only non-Lola race win with his Monsieur Rochas Tiga SC77.

There were two Tigas running throughout the season, those of Webb, whose was the first production model, and John Brindley, whose Brindley Fabrics SC77 was the second off the line. Produced by ex-Grand Prix stars Howden Ganley and Tim Schenken, the Tigas suffered from being rather heavier than the Lolas, until new bodywork was introduced mid-season and it was not until this stage that the Tigas became consistent challengers. Webb’s stalwart efforts were rewarded with third place in the championship and Brindley’s with fifth.

Of the other regular championship con-

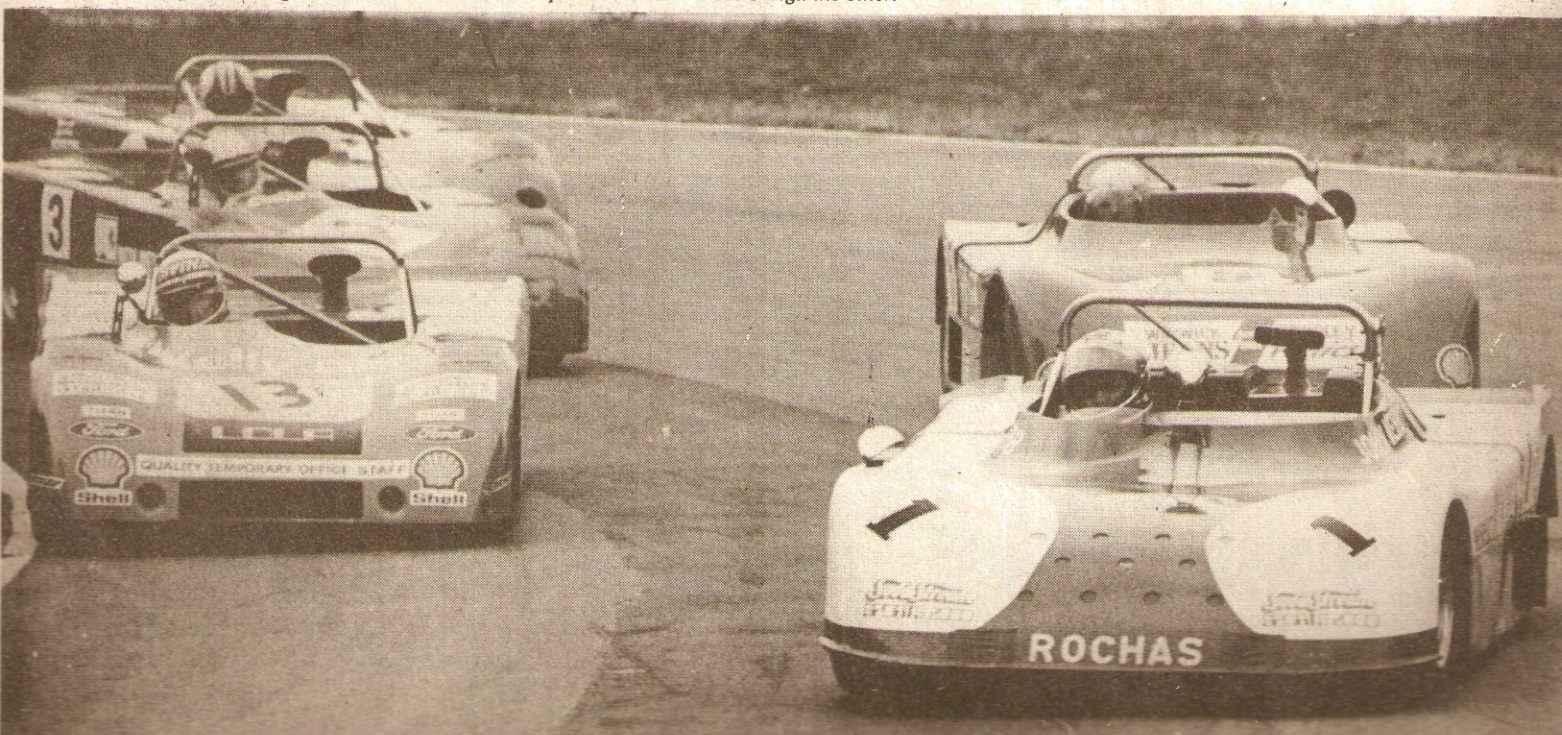
tenders, Chris Alford ran a Lola sponsored by Standard Tyres & Exhausts after the old modified Saracen he ran for the first five races of the season proved uncompetitive. Rod Gretton spread his Century Oils sponsorship over a Sports 2000 Lola and a prodsports TVR, his sports car exploits leaving him fifth in the championship, the first man in the order not to have won a race. Other Lolas were run by Michael Ostroumoff with sponsorship from Esso, John Brown and Mike Kimpton, backed by the former’s business, John Brown Wheels, and Ted Toleman, entered by his own business, Toleman Deliveries. Juliette Slaughter was the ‘number two’ driver for Divina’s Kelly Girl Lola, but only got one race, in practice for which, incidentally, she was quicker than boyfriend Brindley.

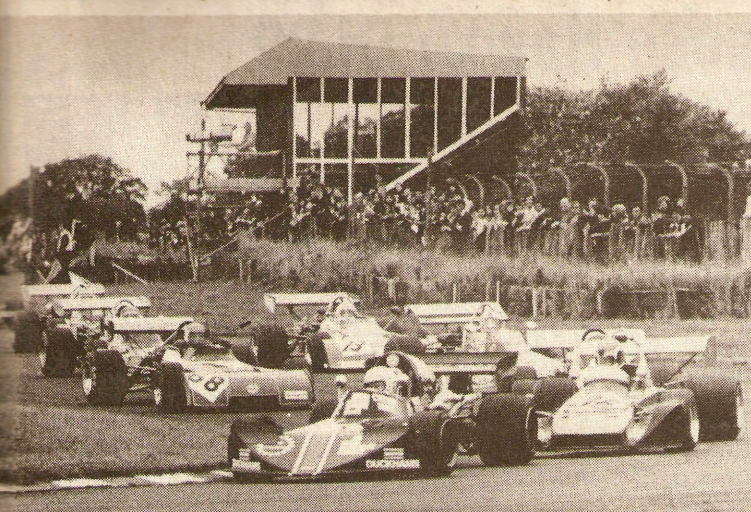
Jack Patterson ran an elderly Royale and Frank Blanchard the Blanche, which was, in fact a much-modified Royale, during the early part of the season; Denny Shattock and Peter Slade had outings in a couple of rounds and Tony Strawson had one go in the ex-Blanchard Saracen.

To judge just how competitive the Sports 2000 season was or how competitive the drivers would be outside the formula is very difficult. As an indication, however, compare the performances of a number of the ‘one-off’ guest drivers in the series. The most frequently-used car for outsiders was the Toleman Lola, which was raced by South African Rad Dougall, resting from his Tolemans FF2000 car, and F3 star Derek Daly. Both these single-seater aces won in their first outings in the formula—both, incidentally, at Oulton Park—and both were very impressed with the handling and driveability of the Lola while FF2000 driver Desiré Wilson all but beat Divina at Snetterton in the same car. Ex-Formula Super Vee Champion John Morrison might have beaten Cooper at Thruxton in John Brown’s Lola, but for some unfortunate incidents during the race. Alex Hawkrige also appeared in the Tolemans car and Lou Loushin made one outing in John Webb’s Tiga.

The prospects for next season are good, more than 20 drivers already signed up with the Sports 2000 Register—kept by ‘the other John Webb’—and some sponsorship deals are ready to be announced in the very near future. For an opening season, Sports 2000 has achieved no more than expected and, certainly, nothing less. The initial sponsors, SodaStream, are back for a further year with some exciting new ideas for promotion.

Lolas to the left, Tigas to the right! Divina’s Lola leads one queue and John Webb’s Tiga the other.





British Formula Atlantic looks as strong now as it did in 1974: Alan Jones leads the late Tony Brise.

Single-seaters in Eire '78

Irish Atlantic looks good for 1978, and even if only some of the stories are founded on fact the pointers indicate a great season indeed for Ireland's premier category.

After winning the Irish Championship for the last four years with Chevrons, Patsy McGarrity is changing his allegiance from the Bolton firm in the direction of Bicester, and will be seen in the March 772P/782 driven to victory in the last European F2 round at Donington by Bruno Giacomelli—the car modified to Atlantic spec with BDA in place of the BMW unit.

Harold McGarrity has taken over brother Patsy's Chevron B39, a car which originally disappointed Patsy but which he sorted (and re-built following a high speed 'off' in a sprint) to not only win the Irish series but also the two prestige Atlantic races of the year, the John Player Trophy at Phoenix Park and the Texaco Leinster Trophy at Mondello Park. Bill Gowdy, who surprised everyone by setting the fastest lap at Phoenix Park, has ordered a new Ralt; and John Eastwood has the Alo Lawler Lola T462. Joey Greenan has sold the Eastwood Chevron B29 to former March man John Smith, and is believed to be returning to Formula Ford instead of going Atlantic. Other B29s will be handled by Richard Parsons and Tom O'leary.

Gerry Kinnane is again running a Modus for Des Donnelly, with another Modus for John Pollock, having sold the Pollock B29 to O'Leary. Mike Nu-

gent will probably continue to campaign his Modus M3, and Dunlop Sexton champion David Hall is replacing his 1.3 Imp 'superloon' with a Modus, but is in urgent need of sponsorship. Making a welcome return to Atlantic is Ken Fildes, who has bought Des Donnelly's March 73B and is currently carrying out a complete rebuild and will appear with a new BDA engine. No news of Eddie Jordan's plans, but he is bound to appear with a replacement for the Marlboro Team Ireland March 74B. All in all, over 20 Atlantics are predicted for the '78 season; and the Atlantic drivers have agreed to allow in Formula 3 cars to cater for anyone interested in getting F3 off the ground in Ireland.

Kenneth Acheson is to compete in British Formula Ford 1600 championship rounds with a Van Diemen, hoping to emulate the successes of David Kennedy and Derek Daly; and Michael Roe may also continue in UK racing on a rather more serious note than last year. Bernard Devaney had an unhappy year with Hawke and is trying to tie a Formula 3 deal together, or at least upgrade himself to FF2000.

On the Irish scene, former saloon and modsports driver Tony Brennan is going FF with a new Van Diemen. Vivian Candy and Arnie Black will have Crosslé 32Fs, former Mini racer Cyril McCabe has the ex-Candy 30F and Denis McCarthy has the ex-Greenan Castrol Championship-winning Royale RP24.

Mondello Park changes

Motor Racing Circuits directors Stuart Cosgrave and Bosco O'Brien are most upset regarding the Irish Motor Racing Club's sudden-death decision to cancel the Christmas Mondello Meeting, which had been scheduled for December 27. IMRC cancelled due to insufficient entries, some drivers complained of not receiving regs, and Cosgrave reckoned that the holiday tradi-

including kart and/or motorcycle races if not enough car races could have been staged.

As a result of this, it is on the cards that Mondello Park's traditional St. Patrick's Day season opener may be a motorcycling meeting, with the March 17 car date brought forward to March 12; which would be a better date, on account of the proximity of the Easter

TEAC launch Minicross series

Minicross—a new word which, if the Thames Estuary Automobile Club have their way, will soon be a household motor sport word. Final regulations are now available from the club for a new category aimed at competitors with very small budgets.

TEAC intend to run six meetings in South East England with the first in late May—discussions are under way to decide dates and venues. Circuits will be about 600yds long on grassland and ten starters are envisaged for the emphatically non-contact sport.

Designed to encourage newcomers to motor sport, the regulations are provided for the minimum (sorry!) of modifications to a standard Leyland Mini shell. No lightening will be allowed, except for the use of fibreglass

bonnet and boot panels and flared arches will be banned. Standard Mini subframes, suspension and brakes are mandatory.

The 850cc engine of the standard Mini is the power unit, with a limited number of modifications and no limited slip diffs will be allowed. A complete and competitive car could be bought and prepared for as little as £350.

A complicated system of qualifying races, semi-finals and finals has been devised and details of this, along with full regs for the formula, are available from Mark Poynton at 27A Stromness Road, Southend, Essex; tel: 0702 610711. Specific technical queries should be directed at David Canacott, Pole Position Racing, 207 London Road, Southend; tel: 0702 354773.

Cloud forms over Brentford

Alan Howell, the former Formula 1 mechanic who, as team manager, has run the Unipart Formula 3 March-Dolomites, has formed a new race preparations company based at Brentford in Middlesex. To be known as Cloud Engineering, the new firm can undertake any kind of preparation from Formula 1 downwards, and Howell is also planning to run cars in competition as well as to construct his own chassis.

Howell has long thought about building a Formula Ford 2000 car and, now that he has set up his own shop, he is going ahead with a chassis based on his own design. In addition, he will be

running a new Formula 3 Ralt for Ian Flux, the former British Formula Vee Champion who is working with Howell at Cloud. Another Formula 3 programme is shortly to be announced.

Cloud will also be running a Sports 2000 Lola for Adrian Hall, the former saloon driver.

An interesting aspect of the setup at Cloud is the establishment of a superbike repair and maintenance workshop under the same roof of the company's premises at Strand House, 6 Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex (tel: 01-560 4460).

Brands Hatch open test days

Once again in 1978 Brands Hatch will be staging two special test days at the end of February with new drivers and cars and, of course, the coming season in mind. Organised by the BRSCC, these test sessions take place on the 1.2-mile club circuit on Sunday, February 19, and on the full 2.61-mile Grand Prix track the following Sunday, February 26. This will be the only time this year when the long circuit will be available for general testing.

Both test days will be split up into groups of cars with comparable performance thus eliminating the vast speed differential which has occurred in the

past. Practice starts at 9.30am and continues until 4.30pm with an hour's break for lunch at 12.30pm. All drivers must hold current RAC Competition licences and medical certificates and their cars must conform to the RAC vehicle regulations.

The circuits will be fully manned by the regular Brands marshals and food will be available from the clubhouse. For use of the short circuit a charge of £12.50 will be made while the GP circuit sessions cost £17.50. No bookings can be accepted on the day and limited applications will be treated on a first come first served basis by Jane Partington on Ash Green 874445.



M&H Racemaster's new wet tyre.

Success for M&H

M&H Racemaster Tyres have had their most successful season yet in Britain where they are rapidly gaining a greater share of the market in all types of applications. As M&H rubberwear is only allowed in Monoposto and F4 on the single-seater racing front at present the company were encouraged to have Monoposto champion 'The Streaker' and leading F4 man Bobby Laughton running their tyres in 1977.

Mick Hill, Peter Day, Reg Ward, Cliff Watts, Brian Prebble, John Homewood and Rupert Long all ran them in special saloons. Martin White used M&H tyres on his Mallock in clubmans with Richard Jenvey (international 2-litre Sports), Steve Roberts, Pat Longhurst, John Bury and Max Payne utilising them in the sports classes. Charles Barter, Chris Cramer, Norrie Galbraith used M&H on their Imp, March and Mallock respectively on the hills with Godfrey Crompton (Leda) backing them up in the RAC sprint event at Weston.

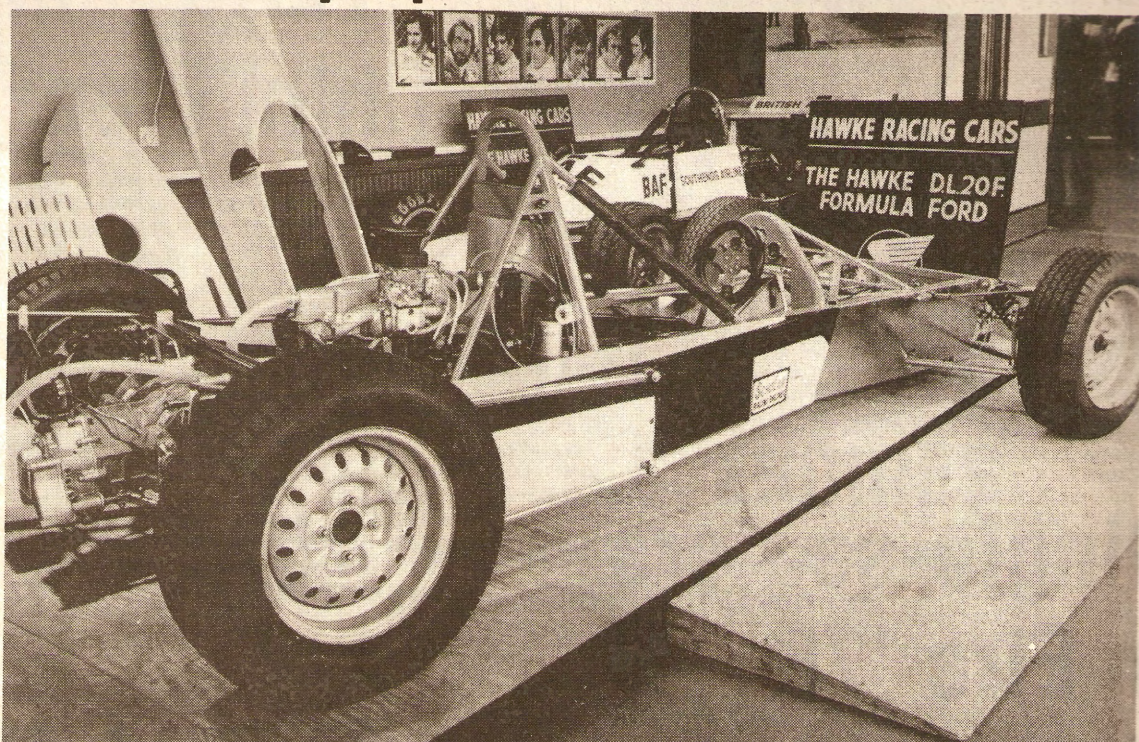
Many of the top rallycross drivers including Trevor Reeves and Gordon Rogers have used the tyres as have Phil May (German Hot Rod champion) and David Hall on the Irish modified saloon scene. For the 1978 season M&H Racemaster have expanded their range to cover most popular sizes and have recently launched a new wet pattern tyre in three compounds to give optimum balance between straight line stability and cornering power in adverse conditions.

Watson in Gibraltar

Former prodsaloon racer Simon Watson is now living and working in Gibraltar, but has not forsaken his motor sport interests. He has joined the Gibraltar Automobile Club, been elected a committee member and will be hill-climbing a special saloon type 1.3 Mini-Cooper.

The Gibraltar AC, which recently held its annual meeting, is hoping to become RAC affiliated and the British authorities are considering allowing an increased number of hillclimbs at Lathbury Barracks. Kart-racing is also popular on the Rock, competition centred on Winston Churchill Avenue.

New multi-purpose Hawke DL20



Hawke Racing Cars are currently putting the finishing touches to their new four-car range for 1978. As reported in the Donington Show feature (page 8) the FF1600 and F3 machines were displayed while the DL20SF FF2000 and the DL20SV chassis have not been shown in public as yet. Hawke Racing Cars also plan to field between four and six semi-works cars in 1978, the drivers of which have yet to be selected. Having developed the current DL19 FF1600 chassis into a competitive car towards the end of 1977 Hawke will have updating kits available to owners of older chassis early in January.

Shell increase bonuses for 1978

The popular ShellSport Gold Star Awards will continue once again in 1978 with a record prize fund and increased bonus payments for the club driver. Over 500 drivers shared in 1977's £20,000 prize fund and, for the coming year, all restricted events will reflect increased payment provided that they take place at RAC race meetings and selected rallies. Open to all drivers using Shell fuel and motor oils, the revised scale is: International events, £50; National events, £30; Restricted events, first 10 wins, £20; 10-20 wins, £25 and over 20 wins, £30.

For the first time there will also be four special two-monthly bonus payments for the most successful driver in each of the periods in the season. The top ten drivers over the year will be entitled to free supplies of oil for the following season and the top dozen will be invited to compete in a special ShellSport Escort race at Brands Hatch on Boxing Day. Competitors wishing to enter for the award scheme must register with ShellSport before March 30 and registration forms, with full details, are now available from ShellSport Gold Star Awards (Cars), Shell UK Oil, Shell-Mex House, Strand, London WC2R 0DX.

Five-car Dutton



Reynard Agent Dutton: big effort.

Richard Dutton Racing are to run four, and possibly five, works-assisted Reynard SF78s in FF2000 next season it was revealed from Donington over the weekend. The preparation expert Dutton is, of course, a distributor for Reynard Cars and is currently engaged in building chassis 2-6 at his workshops in Long Bennington. Chassis 2, Rick Gorne's Barratt/Emiliani car is the Donington machine, number 3 is destined for Simon Kirkby, number 4 is at present vacant (Dutton is looking for a competitive driver with some financial backing to run in the car), number 5 will be driven by the proprietor himself and the last machine has been ordered by long-time member Tim Wallwork.

Janglia

Charlwood Transport, a Kent-based haulage company operating throughout Britain and Europe, are to sponsor a special saloon car in 1978. The driver will be 25-year-old Gary Charlwood, proprietor of the company, who has already had a couple of outings in the ex-David Holmes Jaguar-powered Anglia at the end of last year. Charlwood will share the car with Ian Oatridge and, in their spare time, they will work on designing and building a Ford-engined Imp to add to the team for 1979. Assistance in the preparation of the Janglia comes from the company's employees, the 290bhp machine having been raced on the Northern circuits until the middle of the season. It will appear in the orange and white livery of Charlwood Transport.

Rallycross Fiesta

There was little to interest the club enthusiast at the annual Ford Motorsport press conference last Wednesday, most of the major news surrounding Group 1 (see *Pit & Paddock*) and rallying (see *Special Stage*). Ford, as previously announced, are sponsoring the RAC FF1600 Championship themselves and Debenhams will again support the BRSCC's Ford Escort Sport challenge.

One point that will interest club fans, however, is that John Taylor will be responsible for the slow competition development of the Fiesta, a 1.6 version of which he will be rallycrossing this season. From rear-wheel drive 2-litre Escorts to the front-wheel-drive Fiesta should make an interesting transition.

Briefly . . .

● The third National Custom Car Show takes place at Alexandra Palace from February 18-26. The show, which aims to promote all that's best in the art of customising, has attracted all of Britain's top exponents who will compete for a multitude of cash prizes and trophies. The two previous shows were held at Olympia, crowds of 48,000 and 78,000 reflecting the enormous growth in the popularity of street rodding, 'cruising' and the like. This year there will be over 200 exhibits, each a lavish display of master craftsmanship which no real motoring enthusiast should miss.

● The Tynemouth & DMC are running their Three Rivers Rally on February 4/5 which is the first qualifier in the 1978 ANECC championship. The 150-mile route includes ten selectives and covers maps 80, 81, 87 and 88. Their novices event, for the Turnbull Trophy, will be run concurrently with the main rally and entries for either event are available now at £9.50. Secretary of the Meeting, from whom regs are available is Jane Stanger-Leathes, 10 Fernville Road, Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 4HT. Tel: 853040.

● The Mini Se7en club have informed us that regulations are now available for their Timpson Icebreaker Rally which is to be run on February 26/27. The event takes place entirely in Anglesey and constitutes the first round of the ANWCC Rally Championship. Sponsored by Timpson Shoes, the Icebreaker was last run in 1971 when it enjoyed a good reputation. In resurrecting it, it is the club's intention to return the rally to its previous status as their premier rally. Bernard Gibbons has the regs and he can be contacted at Hillside Cottage, Hill Top, Barnton, Northwich, Cheshire.

● Strange rumour department, from the Brands Hatch marshals: it isn't true what they say about George Skinner and wedding bells. Oh! isn't it?

● The Oxford University MDC has had to abandon their 1978 Targa Rusticana Rally due to financial difficulties. However, a larger committee has been formed with a view to running the targa again in 1979.

● Prodsaloon racer Larry Mooney reigns as President of the Irish Racing Drivers' Association for the second year in succession with Nora Aspell as secretary, and Alec Watkins as treasurer. Committee of representatives of the various classes is as follows: Ken Fildes (Atlantic), Don Kissane (Modsports), Tom Mahon (Modsaloons), David Sheane (Formula VW), Ian Avril (Mini-7), and John Ryan (Registrar). The complete absence of the various championship points standings during the season is one thing the IRDA might seriously consider rectifying in 1978!

● All rallycross drivers hoping to be able to register for the popular Castrol/BTRDA championship are too late: this is already oversubscribed.

● Following the season-long competition run by SodaStream Ltd in conjunction with their sponsorship of Brian Sims in FF1600 the company have pleasure in announcing the winner. The lucky gent was Mr A. Evans of Crosby, Liverpool who walked away from Brands Hatch on December 27 with Sims's Hawke DL17 tucked under his arm, so to speak. Does he intend to race it himself, one asks. Well, we'll have to wait until March to see Evans's first step into racing if he decides to have a go.

● Geoff Clement, the Dartford based Mazda-Chevrolet driver featured in these columns a few weeks back, is still desperately in need of some willing and enthusiastic mechanics to help him out this coming season. Geoff can be reached on Dartford 70135 any time.

● The Endeavour Motor Company, Brighton's main Ford dealer, is holding a Rally Sport and Speed Week at its Preston Road headquarters from January 9-15. Among the many cars on show will be the 1977 East African Safari Rally winning Escort, several F1, F2 and F3 cars, Stuart Glass's Pink Panther clubmans car and the latest Mallock along with John Brown Wheels' Lola Sports 2000 and a selection of rally Escorts for enthusiasts to test drive.

● While production saloon racing thrives in Ireland, special saloons are rather thin on the ground. David Hall's lightweight 1.3 Imp has not yet been sold, but several drivers are extremely interested. Mattie McNamara will have his RS2000-shape 1.3 Escort-BDA ready for the full season, and Fintan Cunningham will have a new 1.3 Mini-BDA which is ready to roll and only requires the mill.

● Following the success of TEAC's 1977 Mini 7 championship, eventually won by Richard Hamlyn, the club have decided to run a similar series in '78. The championship will be run at Lydden and Snetterton although the dates will not be announced for a few weeks yet.

● Ruth Lockwood, who for four years held the post of Membership Secretary of the BRSCC, has joined former BRSCC Executive Director Nick Syrett at the Rivet Supply Company. She will be in attendance at all the Rivet Supply sponsored events in 1978 as hostess on 'the Yellow Bus' hospitality unit.

● Sheffield & Hallamshire MC are running their Rally of the Dons in 1978 with generous backing from Marina Holidays, a successful package tour operator in the Yorkshire area. The Marina Holidays Rally of the Dons will take place in September and will be one of the two major Sheffield & Hallamshire promotions this year.

● The Circle and Harrow CCs' sprint meeting will once again be the only sprint to be held at Brands Hatch this year when it is run on Sunday, February 5. This is the biggest single unsponsored event to be staged by the two clubs and has attracted a capacity entry of 120 competitors. Each of the two runs will comprise two laps and there will be full commentary and amenities for spectators.

● Oops, clang department: contrary to the announcement in *Sports Extra* (December 22/29), limited slip differentials will not be allowed in production saloon racing next year. The mistake resulted from a misprint in an RAC newsletter. This rule also applies to Renault 5s and Escort Sports.

● Sweetness turned sour for the Sheffield and Hallamshire Club recently. After changing the date of their Harrison Sporting Trial to avoid a clash with an apparently immovable Yorkshire SCC clubbie, they found that the new date clashed with another Championship round. The date has now been changed again to April 16 which may prove a blessing in disguise as it is now the last RAC qualifier in the first half of the season and will surely get an excellent entry.

● Next Saturday, February 14, two RAC Scrutineers will be on the MGCC stand at the Donington Speed Show where they will inspect drivers' crash helmets and issue the relevant stickers for eligibility in the coming season. It is hoped that this may help to clear some of the inevitable early season rush at meetings in March.

Baric back



Roger Orgee, whose FF2000 season last year was sadly curtailed through lack of finance, is bringing a new sponsor to motor sport this season. Baric Computing Services, a bureau owned jointly by ICL and Barclays Bank, are to sponsor him for a season of FF2000. He is to sell his existing Elden, keep the Nelson engine and find a new chassis: he is shopping around carefully as he feels the current crop of chassis are all pretty good. Orgee, who works for Baric in Bristol, maintains his connections with previous sponsor Modern Engineering, who have also upped their budget. Looks like a good season ahead and, with Baric signed for two years, possibly beyond.

● News from Wales suggests that a new motor race circuit could be included in a new sports facility, planned for a derelict open cast coalmining site in the Rhumney Valley near Tredegar. The local authority, Blaenau-Gwent District Council, have contacted a local motor club and the RAC to investigate the possibilities.

Taylor U2



David Taylor, Managing Director of Automecia in Loughborough, and runner-up in the British Radio production saloon championship last season, seems to have no saloon drives lined up for 1978. Negotiations continue with Manitou team-leader Graham Miles who, it appears, is trying to find money for another large programme, although time is running out. Not wishing to be without a drive of any sort, Taylor has snapped up Phillip Creighton's Tiger Services Mallock U2 Mk18 and will enter it in as many Oceanair and Tricentrol clubmans championship rounds as possible in the colours of Automecia. However, as funds are rather limited at present, the rapid Taylor is looking for some additional backing.

Firebird at Donington



John Hughes of Hawk Sport discusses FF driver Tony Steels's new racesuit at the Donington Show. On the right is the new Hawk Firebird System IV quadruple-layer garment selected by Derek Bell for Le Mans this year.



Lee Chappell concentrates hard while Lindsay waves cheerily from the Ibex.

Ibices overhauled

As all the drivers doffed their red coats and white beards one car put on its red coat again to win the Warco Cup last Sunday. The car in question was the Kincraft of Jack Pearce which had forsaken its Silver Jubilee trim and this along with Charles Pollard's new hat with enormous feather were to prove the mods of the day.

The Trial was an RAC championship round and also qualified towards the BTRDA series which is once again being sponsored by Semperit tyres. Organisers were Peterborough MC in general and Norman Manser in particular with Rent-a-Hill assistance on Hills 2 and 3. The ten hills were very tightly marked and quite steep and bumpy so that aerobatics were the order of the day. The entry was a splendid one with the main item of interest before the start being Ken Harrison's sparkling new Ibex sprayed in (Kincraft ?) red.

Initially the Ibices were in control over more normal methods of transport as Lee Chappell and Gordon Jackson went into a commanding lead ahead of John Benson, Charles Pollard and Jack Pearce. At this point reigning Champion Julian Fack was down in 15th spot behind Production Car Trials Champion—Roger Bricknell. Fack made up some ground later on to finish fifth, somewhat better than British Expert Tony Harrison who was 13th.

The Trial looked to be all over by lunchtime as Chappell and Jackson pulled clear holding a 19 point lead over Pearce and Benson. But it was not to be and, when Jackson retired and Chappell scored a disastrous 35, Pearce moved in by virtue of a fine last round of 4 to shade out John Benson who must have thought that his final round of 8 would be good enough. Both the other Jabs drivers retired—Hugh Pollard with clutch trouble and Derek Clark with transmission failure.

Charles Pollard also beat Chappell with Fack and John Hopkins taking the minor placings. David Lowe had an absolutely splendid day to finish ninth, equal on points with eighth man George Fisher and only just behind Richard Allen. Others to finish above their usual stations were Tom Stevenson in 11th—with a splendid second round score of 9, Richard Rimes in 10th and Roger Bricknell who did well to finish 20th in his old car.

PAUL SHELDON

1, Jack Pearce/Brenda Pearce (Kincraft), 68 pts; 2, John Benson/Sheila Benson (Jabs), 72; 3, Charles Pollard/Margaret Pollard (Kincraft), 79; 4, Lee Chappell/Lindsay Chappell (Ibex), 80; 5, Julian Fack/Meg Marion (Impunity), 99; 6, John Hopkins/Peter Mitchell (Ibex), 100; 7, Richard Allen/Tim Crow (Kincraft), 112; 8, George Fisher/A. Brown (Iris), 115; 9, David Lowe/Kevin Sweeney (Locomotion), 115; 10, Richard Rimes/Julia Rimes (Aberliss), 122.

Pook's Midget in Newfoundland

Dudsbury CC again held the first local motor sport event of the year when they promoted their Newfoundland Autotest at Baiter in Poole on January 1. Despite the bleary eyes and lack of practice, competition was to a very high standard and some of the newer faces to Autotesting showed good form. Richard Acres shared Fred Gallagher's Midget as opposed to his usual Mini, but he was still to be found in the results at the end of the day, as was Fred himself despite a hectic Christmas commuting between his native Ireland and his home near Bournemouth.

Colin Pook showed his usual impeccable style to take FTD in his Midget but was closely tailed by Dudsbury's Brian Luker, who proved his mastery of his 1600 Escort will soon be complete by giving the exceedingly hardy crowd of spectators that gathered through the afternoon an excellent show of skill while on his way to first in class E. Roy

Baker got it all together to take the award for first in class A but was closely followed by Stephen White, both in Minis. First novice Julien Brierly was also Mini mounted, his being a 998cc version. Paul Redfern drove his 1100 Escort in an incredibly flamboyant manner to record first in class D. Graham Hoare, happy to be in an un-amalgamated class for a change, stamped his mark by driving to a good first in class F in his West Hants and Dorset stickered 1303 Beetle while class F also contained the first lady in the form of Southampton member Janet Hanley driving a 1300 Simca.

John Forsyth driving with extreme verve took his special to a death defying first in class G just ahead of Richard Acres who finished an unusual second in class, leaving ace Leyland navigator Fred Gallagher competing in a totally alien form of sport finishing best Dudsbury.

First Silver Star to Woolley/Chennells

Cambridge crew Melvyn Woolley and Dave Chennells were the provisional winners last Saturday night of the West Essex CC Karebrand Rally, the first round of the BTRDA Silver Star Rally Championship. In their RS1800 they won the 170 mile event in Norfolk by a mere 8secs from Rob Grant and Tony Hardware in an RS2000.

Third, and first BTRDA entrants, were Ted Cowell and Rod Palmer (RS2000) a further 3mins behind and, if their protest is successful, Malcolm Byron and Geoff Hignett will be fourth in their RS1800 less than half a minute down on Cowell.

The latter were penalised a fail for failing to collect a signature at a passage control and officials were not able to adjudicate on the protest at the finish.

The pressure was on for the 65 crews right from the start. The first third was

plot and bash and this was followed by seven selectives on which Woolley was quickest on three with Byron taking best time on two others. At two thirds distance Woolley was under considerable pressure but although Grant picked up 2mins on the final section he was just not able to pull back the entire deficit.

Only five BTRDA crews finished out of seven entries, the other two did not appear and Cowell looks to have picked up a useful 15pts maximum first time out.

1, Melvyn Woolley/Dave Chennells (RS1800), 57m 58s; 2, Rob Grant/Tony Hardware (RS2000), 58m 6s; 3, Ted Cowell/Rod Palmer (RS2000), 61m 4s; 4, Charles Golding/Preston Ayres (Dolomite Sprint), 61m 30s; 5, Neil and Chris Parsons (RS1800), 66m 56s; 6, John Harner/John Porter (Mexico), 67m 0s. **Semi-experts:** John Powell/Bernard Baker (Escort), 4F 92m 55s. **Novices:** R. Dickson/P. Bird (RS2000), 12F 99m 9s.

Collard becomes an all rounder

Better known for his efforts in hot rod racing Mick 'Duffy' Collard scored what is believed to be his first road rally success last Saturday night. In company with Barry Cooper, he drove his RS1800 to victory on the East Berkshire MC Oakleaf Rally in the Buckinghamshire/Oxfordshire area.

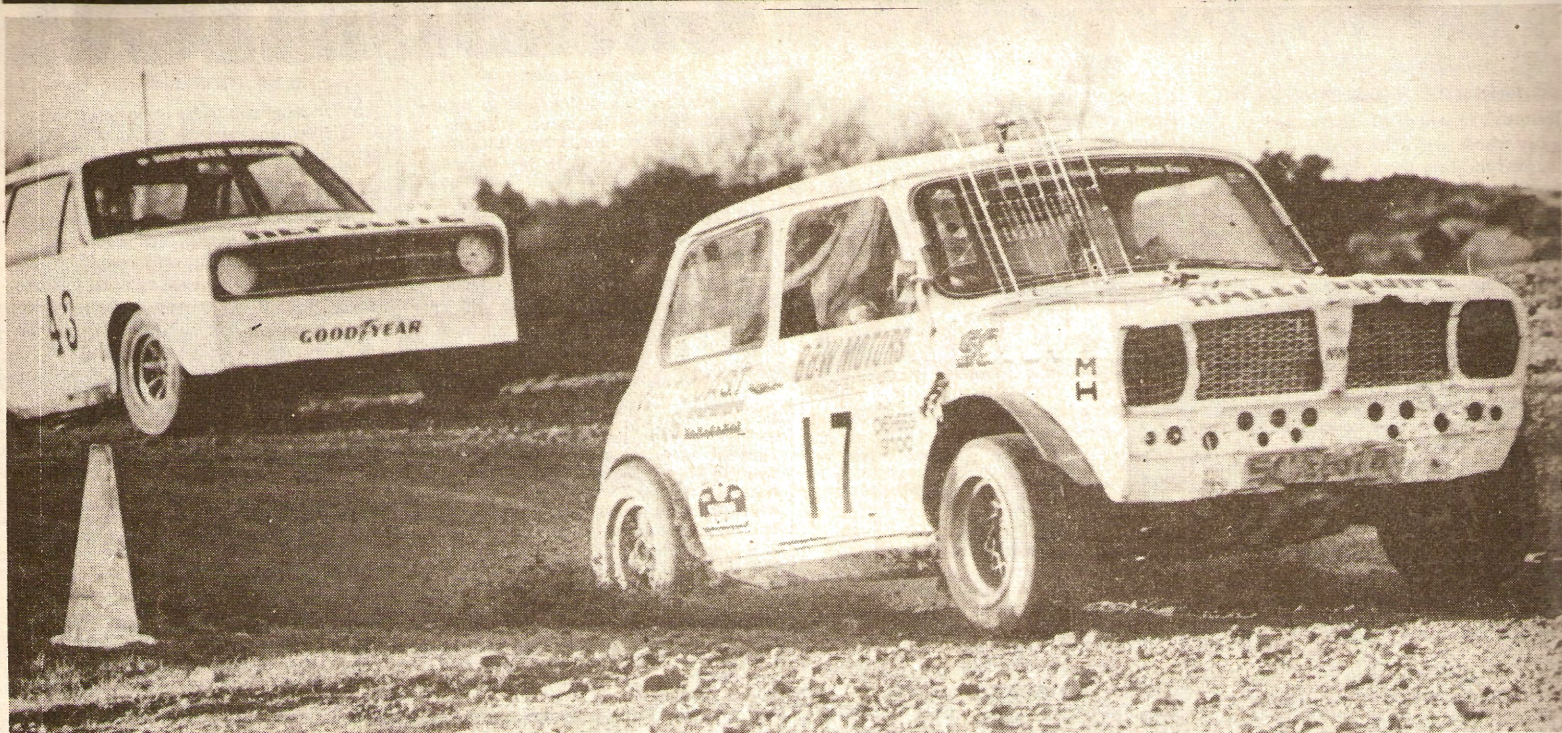
Collard and Cooper dropped 47m 21s on the 175 mile route which was foggy at the start but fortunately cleared later although there were some icy patches.

In the early part of the event, Bill Harrap and Peter Rushforth took an initial lead in their RS2000 but they came to an untimely halt when they crashed through a railway bridge, plunged 30ft to the railway line below and inverted the car. Both were unscathed.

Collard and Cooper then assumed the lead but were chased hard by Graham Dale and Nigel Evans in another RS2000 but their rally ended when they flew off the road with only three controls to visit and they became well bogged down. Ron Lee and Jon Quelch (Escort), were well up with the leaders until the rotor arm snapped four controls from the end to put an end to a good outing.

An interesting car was the VW Nova of Don Law/Dave Skeavington which was among the front runners until the Stratos-like machine started to eat up fan belts and they retired.

1, Mick Collard/Barry Cooper (RS1800), 47m 21s; 2, Dick Mauger/Dick Shepley (Mazda), 53m 25s; 3, Derek Looker/Jim Bowie (Anglia), 57m 56s; 4, Roland Shepherd/Mike Wise (RS2000), 59m 51s; 5, Colin Short/John Phillips (Mazda), 61m 25s; 6, Malcolm Anderson/Roland Carlin (Imp), 61m 25s.



Above: Action from last week's Longridge rallycross as Mal Woodhouse leads Tony Drummond. Below: John Taylor demonstrates his rally car.

Webber's maximum

Dominating the series from start to finish Nigel Webber and Phil James were easy winners of the Sixty & Wores MC Stage Rally Championship last year. In their Welsby Fabrications Team Emmex Escort 1300 they scored maximum points as well as taking many class wins. Runners-up were Alan Corns/Kelvin Roberts in their Arjay

Tyres/Severn Valley Rustproofing Mexico.

Winners of the Road Rally Championship were Dave Pugh and Bill Pardoe. After starting well with four maximums in their Three Counties Photo Services RS2000 they ran into a poor spell and they only clinched the title on the last round when they finished eighth on the Nutcracker Rally. Runners-up were Andy Taylor and Richard Handy in their A44 Service Station RS2000. Third overall and best novices were Pete Watkins and David Wheeler in an Avenger. The off road championship went to Derrick Davies in his Leigh Sinton Motors Saab 96 and Elizabeth Dudley took the ladies series by a single point from Linda Macdonell.



Another AMMC title to Webb

For at least the third year in succession, Ray Webb won the AMMC Autotest Championship last year. In his Austin Healey Sprite he scored a maximum of 30pts from his best five results from the six round series and he was BTD at all five. John Larkin (Clubman GT) and Cecil Dickson (VW), both collected

30pts and won their classes. Other winners in the categories were Roger Atkinson (Sprite), 20pts, Mike Bennett (Alfasud), 10pts and Pete Jeffrey (Escort), 28pts. The newcomers award went to Nick Pollitt in his Mini with 18pts.

Millman's Olympia

With the pressure on all night and with two selectives included in the 145 mile route in South Devon, South Hams MC crews took first and second places last Saturday night on the Torbay MC Olympia Rally.

Winners, after leading all night and being first away in a field of 45 were Bruce Millman and Peter Evans in an RS 2000 who dropped 46m 15s to beat John Sampson/Roger Gillard (Cooper S), by almost 4 mins.

Held mainly in territory covered by the South Hams club but briefly touch-

ing Haden and Dartmoor the rally was held in fine weather, without trouble from the police and of the 20 non finishers most retired with mechanical troubles.

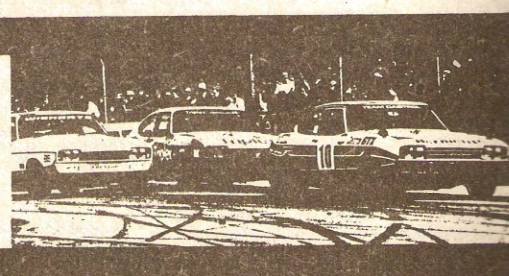
1, Bruce Millman/Peter Evans (RS2000), 46m 15s; 2, John Sampson/Roger Gillard (Cooper S), 50m 2s; 3, David Adams/S. Hill (Mexico), 50m 36s; 4, Chris Waffin/Brian Benson (RS 2000), 51m 19s; 5, John Baggage/Mike Wicks (Cooper S), 55m 59s; 6, Dave Pitcher/Tony Greenwood (BMW 2002), 62m 12s. **Semi-experts:** M. Pulley/J. Synder (Cooper S), 73m 32s. **Novice:** Martin Lawrence/A. Clements (Escort) 5F 70m 19s.

International events

Date
Jan 13/15
Jan 15
Jan 15

Venue
Austria
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Manfield, New Zealand

Event
Janner Rally—European Rally Championship for Drivers
Argentine Grand Prix—World Championship for Drivers and Manufacturers, round 1
Peter Stuyvesant Formula Atlantic Series—G2, FV, FF



British events

Date
Jan 14/15
Jan 15
Jan 15
Jan 15
Jan 15

Venue
Fairford
Telford Services, M6
(01891 606062)
Froggatts Farm, Wade Lane, Hill Ridware, Staffs
Lynett Park, Boley, nr Stroud
(01235 555555)

Event
Rally
Rally
Autocross
Prod Car Trial

Status
C
R
R
CP

Club
Craven MC
Knowlale CC
Shenstone & DCC
Cirencester CC

Start
—
22.00
13.00
—

Details
Clubmans Rally
Mini-Miglia Rally
Winter Autocross



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